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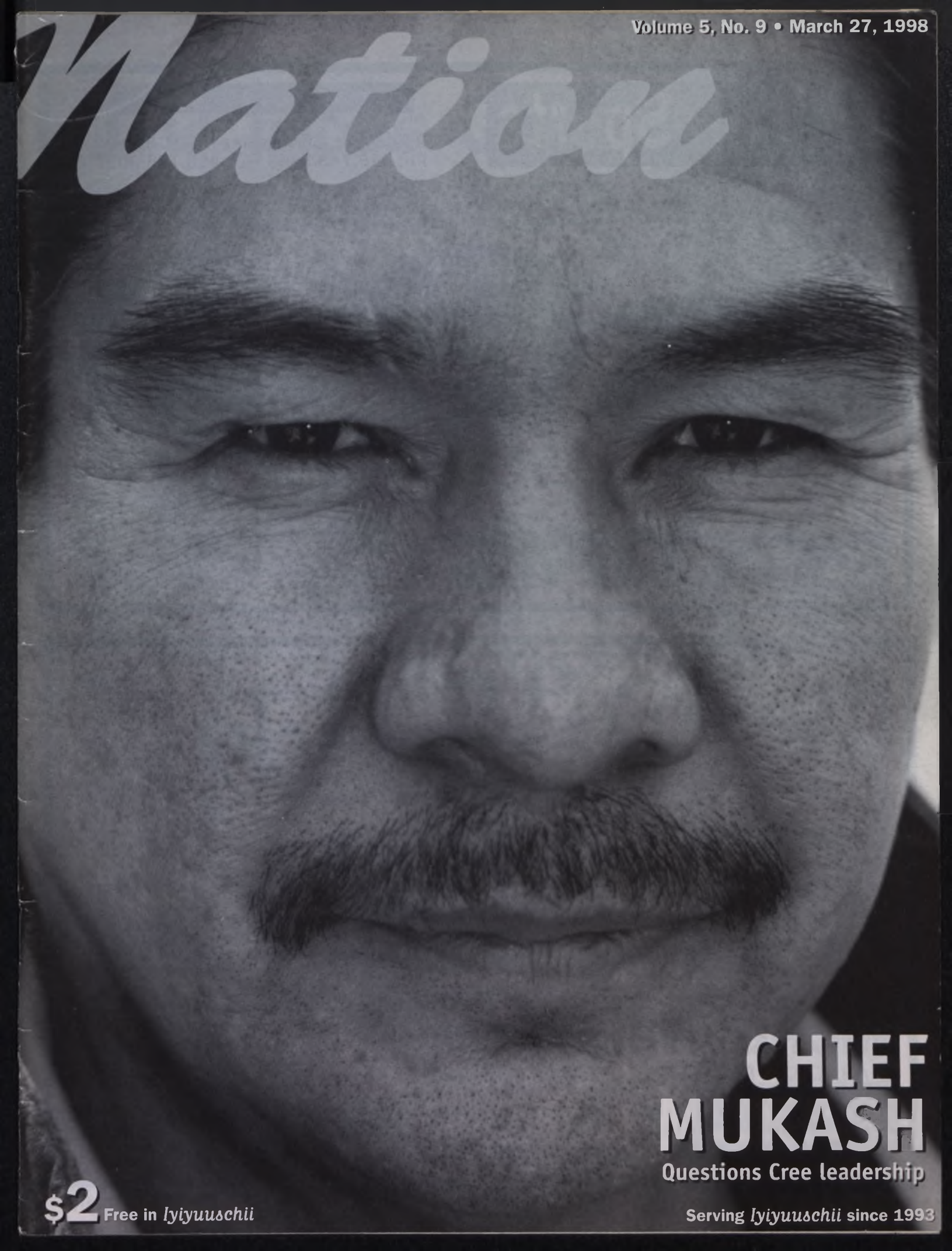
Nation



CHIEF MUKASH

Questions Cree leadership

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The Judas Goat

As I am writing this, events are happening. All of the Cree entities and organizations listed below and more might be examined by both Quebec and the Crees with a view to possibly abolishing some, merging others and maybe changing a few mandates here and there.

At the heart of the matter is part of the deal soon to be signed between the Crees and Quebec, a little section known as Issue No. 5: "Issues with respect to regional authorities." That list includes almost every Cree entity, but no Quebec entities, even though at least one chief remembers that Quebec entities were also supposed to be on the table when the talks with Quebec first started in 1995.

To be reviewed are: the Cree Regional Authority, the James Bay Eeyou Corporation, landholding corporations, Cree municipalities, etc. (see page 5 for more details).

Normally I would be cheering the possibility of needed changes and modernization, but for two simple facts.

Over 90 per cent of the Cree people agreed to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and now less than 1 per cent think they have the power to change it.

The second fact is that this Issue No. 5 makes a mockery of Crees being able to determine their own future. Since when is the Quebec government part of the Crees' right of self-determination? Why wasn't the entire Cree Nation informed of this issue and allowed to participate in the decision to do Issue No. 5.? Are we Crees not all together on the path to self-government? Did we not win court battles affirming a Cree right in that direction for the Cree School Board recently? Why, then, disempower them? In doing this are not all the Cree entities disempowered, subject to the whim of the elected chief and/or Quebec bureaucrat? Questions, questions, but they need thought and answers.

Let us face it. If this Issue No. 5 is just a property right of the Cree leadership, then all those questions point in the same direction. All that has been achieved over the last two decades by the Crees is just a laughable joke. The Great White Father is back and he's going to tell the Cree Savages how to live right and true with Cree leadership approval. There is no Native self-government; there's just The Government. Natives have all been living an illusion. It's time to rejoin Canada's favourite government program, Quebec style, the Buffalo Jump. Let's all become assimilated into the dominant culture. Genocide is a predetermined factor.

By what right were the Cree rights even remotely contemplated in this fashion? Was it the precedent of having a chiefs' meeting make a binding deal for the Crees before the deal ever came before the full Council/Board? Oh, those bad boys and girls, give them an inch, they'll take your future! Just joking. I know some band councils that are quite open and keep their band members well-informed. Not all councils continue to imagine Crees as still wards of the state.

The fact that it was contemplated that Quebec had a right to be involved in deciding the Cree future only proves that Crees need to be vigilant. It also shows that all Crees are necessary to complete this task of Nation-building. We cannot entrust it to the few. If we continue to give the leaders the burdens of the many, then we must expect them to falter. We must be ready to lend a helping hand if this is not to happen.

It was one of the points in the Eeyou Estchee Commission's report. That all Crees should be involved in creating and making a Cree future.

And the title, the Judas Goat? Just part of a fable. It describes the Judas Goat. An animal necessary in any slaughterhouse. Any animal is afraid of the smell of blood and death. The Judas Goat goes first and the trusting animals follow it. Only the Judas Goat survives.

So who is the Judas Goat here. Is it Billy Diamond because of Issue No. 5? Is it *The Nation*, because as one person at the GCCEI/CRA meeting said, by covering this story we are promoting disunity in the Cree Nation? Can it be Ted Moses or Chief Matthew Mukash for their widely distributed letters criticizing Issue No. 5? Is it the entities that were alarmed by the wording and possible interpretation of Issue No. 5 by Quebec?

Perhaps all and none. Debate is healthy and Crees, like all humans, will argue for their view of the future. Not everyone will look at the destiny of the Crees in the same way. Perhaps a little distrust is even healthy.

by William Nicholls

Contents

NEWS

5 Deal under fire
Ted Moses on the MOU

5 $15M released
Chief denounces "lies"

7 Beaudoin's beau
Gets questionable payouts

9 Innu protest
Plus: Skating show

MUKASH

10 Wants debate
Letter to Grand Chief

ᓂᑲᓇᐧᐋᐣ

14 ᐊᓂᒋ ᐅᔨᓂᐱᒻ
Eastmain Elder

COMMISH

21 Cree-Naskapi
Commission's new boss

MOU

24 Issue No. 5
Moses' letter,
Chief Diamond's response

ON THE COVER
Chief Matthew Mukash
photo: Neil Diamond
design: Katerina Cizek

rez notes
by Ndiamon

Travel and vacations shouldn't be just about fine white sand beaches with crashing blue waves, swim up bars with cold pina coladas and nudist Quebecers. Vacations should also be about the country and its people. Good or bad.

Long before I, and even Pope Juan Pablo II, set foot on and kissed Cuban soil, a holy (some will argue unholy) trinity has ruled the Cuban mind, imagination and soul. In spite of the running dogs of imperialism just 90 miles north. Who knows which of the three is the father, the son and the holy ghost.

The best known of the trinity, of course, is Fidel Castro. Ruler of this island nation and the man who kicked out the corrupt U.S. puppet Battista government. Along with the mob and the CIA, who still have yet to forgive and forget 30 years later. Fidel rules with an iron fist, with his brother, Raul, running the military. Few dare accuse him of nepotism lest they end up at the wrong end of the G2 secret police's Russian anti-personnel hardware.

We were having lobster and some fine Cuban beer in a Habana palladar when a friendly German tourist, who, coincidentally, had visited Moosonee in 1967, told us of the wave of executions of enemies of Fidel following the revolution. This not so pleasant dinner conversation was made bearable by the cook and her helpers dancing the rumba or something in the kitchen.

Still, Castro's not all bad. In a TV interview with a U.S. journalist, he was asked what is the difference between prostitution in American cities and Socialist Havana. He answered, "Our prostitutes can read and write."

Castro owes a great debt to his formercommadante in the revolution, Ernesto "Che" Guevara. The Argentinian doctor and leftist icon who fought with him in the mountains and cities of Cuba. His image and words (Hasta La Victoria, Siempre!) are everywhere. On books, murals, key chains, bic lighters, paintings in the market and on a three peso bill I bought as a souvenir illegally for one American dollar. "Che" had a massive falling out with the Soviet Union and Fidel when he criticized them of dealing with U.S. at the expense of the Third World. He quietly left Cuba and led a band of revolutionaries in Central Africa and later in Bolivia where he was captured and murdered by CIA-trained soldiers.

The singing groups who go from table to table in the resort dining rooms still sing songs about him.

Those singers also sing the words of Jose Marti. The other Cuban who's everywhere in Cuba. It seemed like around every corner you turned there was a statue or a bust of him. Not unlike the massive 50's American cars that run as taxis.

Marti was a nationalist poet who lived most of his life in exile in Spain and South America. His most beloved and famous poem "Guantanamera" has become one of those worldwide hits that hardly anyone knows or understands the words to.

It's almost tragic that we only got to stay one night in Havana. But we made up for the too short visit with a whirlwind tour through the old city, China Town and the Plaza Revolucion. At one point, we hopped into a 1951 Chevy with a taxi driver who, in an extreme case of denial, refused to admit he was lost, driving around in circles, nodding, smiling and answering "SI! SI!" when asked in broken Spanish, "Where the hell are you going?"

We'll never forget Jose either. Our impromptu tour guide who had a chance to practice his English on us and, when given a Spanish/English dictionary as a gift, kissed it and the giftbearer like he was kissing Juan Pablo's ring.

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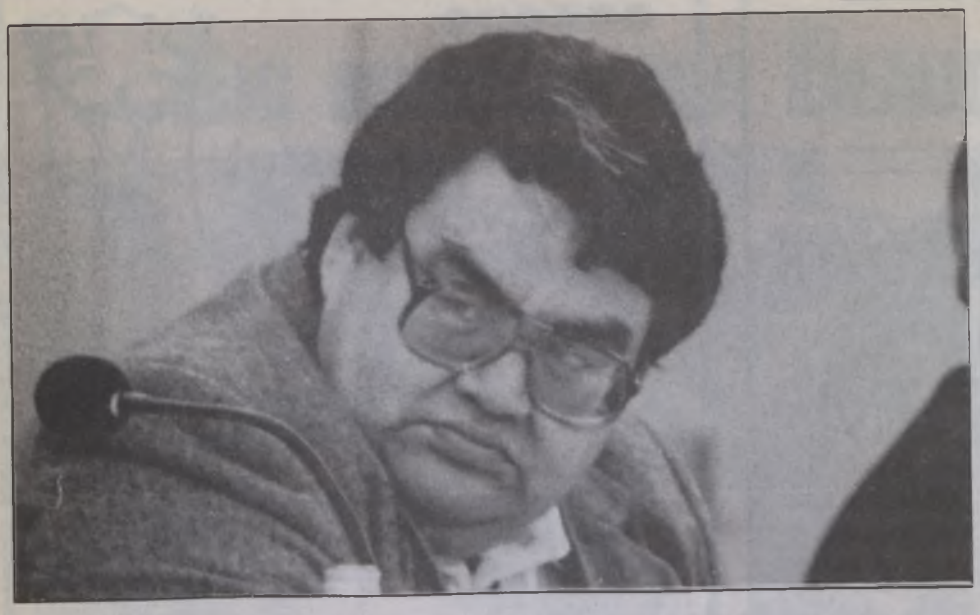

$15M Cree-Quebec deal under fire

The $15-million-dollar deal between the Crees and Quebec has come under criticism again. This time by Dr. Ted Moses, Cree ambassador and federal negotiator.

"I believe that, as drafted, it raises a number of serious concerns," wrote Moses.

Moses was critical of part of the deal that says the Crees agree to sit down with Quebec and review every Cree entity, with a view to streamling some and abolishing others (see p. 24 for full text).

Moses wrote that Cree institutions are fundamental to Cree well being. "It is Cree who will establish Cree priorities, and not the government," he said (see p. 25).

"How am I, as the Cree/federal negotiator, supposed to negotiate increased funding and recognition for the Cree entities, while at another table, the Crees and Quebec are discussing the elimination of the same entities I am mandated to strengthen?" he asked.

The list of Cree institutions to be reviewed includes the Hunters and Trappers Income Security Board, Cree Board of Health and Social Services, Cree School Board, all Cree municipalities, the environmental committees covering the Cree territory, the Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee, the CTA and others.

It was this list that was the topic at a Cree School Board meeting last week. It was also a topic of concern for the Cree Health Board.

Cree provincial negotiator Chief Billy Diamond was quick to respond.

In a letter to James Bobbish, Director General of the Cree Health Board, Diamond writes, "It is, of course, clear on the Cree side that no entity would be subject to any such review unless there was a Cree Nation consensus that changes had to be made." Diamond reassured Bobbish that Quebec understood this as well.

Diamond added that it was an opportunity for the Board to expand or change its mandate if it wished.

Moses took the deal to task, questioning why Crees would sit down with Quebec to review their own institutions without doing so within the Cree Nation first.

He asked where the respect was for "our own Cree Nation government?" He wrote Quebec would never agree to discuss the elimination of its own institutions with the Crees.

Diamond responded by writing that the system proposed in the deal is to make "recommendations on issues -- not action on issues." He also said nothing will happen without Cree agreement that the entity should be reviewed (see Diamond's letter on p. 27).

Diamond wrote that Moses was "tilting at windmills -- there is a danger here that does not exist... Nothing - nothing - nothing happens without the Crees and their institutions consenting. In fact, this is the opportunity for the Crees to strengthen and give effect to Cree Rights -- and indeed to raise them to a higher level."

In his letter, Diamond confides to Moses "there are those who will be against my agreement with Quebec -- not matter what it says and what it contains."

In the letter Diamond blames advisors and says: "WE must decide what is best for our people." He charges, "We have advisors and Cree bureaucrats thinking only of their own gains and not the Cree Nation."

by William Nicholls

Cabinet approves deal with Crees

Chief Billy Diamond brought some good news to the Council/Board meeting March 19th in Montreal.

The day before, the government of Quebec authorized minister Guy Chevrette to sign the $15-million Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Crees.

In a letter, Chevrette thanks Diamond for "the work you have done during the negotiations." Quebec also confirmed by decree the 1997-98 total of $15 million for community-development projects and equipment purchases. In addition, Quebec pledges $196,250 towards the forestry working group, $30,000 for each of the five communities impacted and $46,250 for the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment.

In the March 18 letter, Chevrette said he is ready to meet any time in the "next few days in order proceed with the signature of the agreement."

In the Council/Board meeting in Montreal, Chief Diamond was quick to defend the MOU saying the deal is being signed "without prejudice," a legal term meaning it will not interfere with any Cree court cases or other negotiations.

He talked about Issue No. 5, which concerns a Quebec-Cree joint review of the regional entities: "I know there is great concern." He said the idea and purpose of the negotiations is to get Quebec to respect and fulfill its obligations.

Diamond dismissed the criticisms of the MOU as "lies."

"These lies are ruled by fear and intimidation and lies within the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec and the Cree Regional Authority. These are lies and these same lies are printed in *The Nation*," he said. "The idea is for Crees to set the agenda. Nothing happens unless you sit down with Quebec."

Diamond reassured the entities present. He said the negotiations for the 1997-98 projects have been completed and they are now negotiating the 1998-99 community projects.

Diamond said this is the first time Quebec has admitted to owing capital-project costs to the Crees and that is an important step. The agreement package is worth $132 million over five years reported Diamond.

-by William Nicholls

Congratulations to our Chief, ABEL BOSUM

For being awarded the National Aboriginal Award for Community Development

We are proud of you and we know you greatly deserve this prestigious honour.

Your people of Ouje Bougoumou

The Whapmagoostui First Nation

On behalf of the Whapmagoostui First Nation, I would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to ABEL BOSUM and the Ouje-Bougoumou Crees on an outstanding achievement.

Your community's accomplishment is an example to the Cree communities that your hard work, dedication, and perseverance can lead to such distinguished honour.

We are very proud of your achievement of National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Community Development.

Chief Matthew Mukash
Whapmagoostui First Nation

Congratulations

to Chief Abel Bosum

On behalf of the people of the Nemaska First Nation, the Chief and Council would like to congratulate Chief Abel Bosum of the Cree Nation of Ouje-Bougoumou on his acceptance of

The National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Community Development

Your community has demonstrated what we all could become with positive planning and a vision for the future.

The Chief and Council of the Cree Nation of Mistissini would like to acknowledge Ouje-Bougoumou Chief ABEL BOSUM on being the 1998 recipient of the National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Community Development. Your hard work and dedication is an inspiration to us all.

Congratulations!

BIG BONUSES FOR BEAUDOIN'S BEAU

A HIGH-LEVEL QUEBEC CIVIL SERVANT married to Culture Minister Louise Beaudoin may have received questionable payments from an international agency based in Quebec City, according to documents obtained by *The Nation*.

Francois Dorlot, married to Beaudoin for 25 years, may have violated government rules when he approved payments to himself of at least $11,100 in questionable bonuses and expense-account payments.

Dorlot angrily denied any wrong-doing. "I'm not going to explain anything. I'm not going to answer these lies," he said before abruptly hanging up the phone. He did not return subsequent calls.

Dorlot is a man with a colourful past. He had links to the Front de liberation du Quebec (FLQ) and was bugged by the RCMP in the 1970s because they apparently suspected he was a French spy (*see sidebar*).

The documents show Dorlot received monthly payments of $925 during 1997 while he was on loan from Quebec's International Relations Ministry to the Energy Institute of Francophone Countries. He approved the payments to himself as the institute's assistant director for administration.

The payments came on top of Dorlot's civil-service salary in the $58,400-to-$71,100 range.

The payments break down into a monthly "bonus" of $750 and an expense account of $175, which was paid from the institute's funds, the documents reveal. That's $9,000 in bonuses and $2,100 in expenses for 1997.

The energy institute is part of the Agency of the Francophonie and is supported partly by Quebec taxpayers.

Pierre-Jude Poulin, spokesman for Quebec's Treasury Board, said this level of bonuses and expense payments is totally out of line with Dorlot's rank of cadre superieur. "I've never seen anything like that," he said.

Poulin said a cadre superieur has a maximum expense account of $300 per year and is not entitled to a bonus. Loaned-out civil servants also are not supposed to receive additional salary from their host agency or department, he said. "Normally we don't do that. We don't have double-payments. It's either one or the other."

Asked why, Poulin replied, "It's a question of principle. Normally we don't pay someone who's working somewhere else."

Fatima-Houda-Pepin, Liberal international-relations critic, slammed the payments. "It's against the rules. You can't approve these kinds of payments to yourself. What exceptional work did he do to merit this bonus?"

International Relations spokesman Daniel Amar defended the payments to Dorlot, saying they were for legitimate expenses.

But the energy institute's executive director, El Habib Benessahraoui, confirmed that the payments are indeed a bonus. He said the bonus is permitted under the institute's personnel regulations. He said Dorlot has received the payments since he was first loaned to the institute in March 1996.

Assuming the payments were at the same level, Dorlot stood to receive $22,200.

The payments were recently

by Alex Roslin

continued on page 9

Francois Dorlot: international man of mystery

Francois Dorlot, married to Louise Beaudoin for 25 years, is a man with a past.

Now a high-level Quebec civil servant, he first came to public attention in 1965 during the trial of members of a Quebec revolutionary cell that, along with the Black Liberation Front, had decided to blow up the Statue of Liberty and Washington Monument.

When Quebec revolutionary militant Michelle Duclos was arrested in connection with the plot with a box of dynamite in her car, it was Dorlot who had placed the box in her car, according to a 1995 article in Toronto's *Saturday Night* magazine.

In court, Dorlot testified that he thought the box was a case of books. He was never charged.

Later, in 1968, in what became known as the Dorlot Affair, outraged MPs demanded in the House of Commons why Dorlot was awarded a Canada Council grant to study at the Sorbonne after he was linked to Philippe Rossillon.

Rossillon was a shadowy figure denounced by then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau as a French spy promoting Quebec separatism in Canada.

Radio-Canada reporter Normand Lester, in a book published last week entitled *Enquetes sur les Services Secrets* (Les Editions de l'Homme), says the RCMP broke into Beaudoin's apartment in the 1970s in order to place bugs because they apparently suspected Dorlot was working for French intelligence.

Dorlot's name has also surfaced in reports on the unsolved 1971 Paris murder of FLQ member Francois Mario Bachand, who was on the run from Canadian authorities.

Dorlot allegedly shared an apartment in Paris with Bachand prior to the murder, according to the *Saturday Night* magazine article. After the murder, Dorlot gave Bachand's sister a sketch of a Quebec couple seen with Bachand the afternoon of the murder, Radio-Canada TV said in a report last year.

-Alex Roslin

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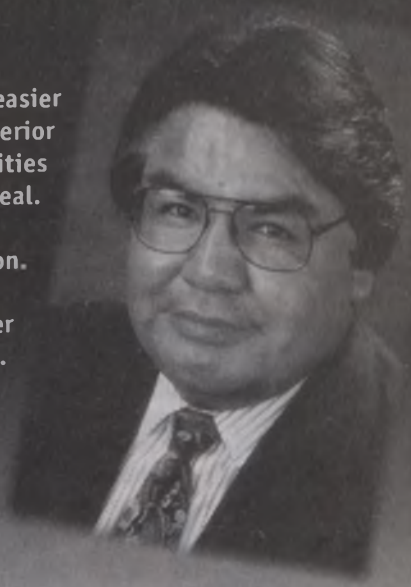

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Ice show to feature Elizabeth Manley

Canadian figure skating champion Elizabeth Manley will be the special guest skater at the upcoming ice show to be put on by the Chisasibi Skating Club in April.

Manley is the last female skater to win any world or Olympic medal for Canada.

Also performing will be members of the club from the community.

The club was started after community members showed great interest in figure skating classes held in recent years. There are already 120 members in the club. The club is open to skaters ages four and up.

Manley is expected to put on two performances, do a radio interview and autograph session, and visit a Cree bush camp.

Source: Rhonda and Olivia Spencer

Payments unusual, officials allege

continued from page 7

renewed for another two years, Benessahraoui said.

"It is a bonus given according to his position. It's something completely normal."

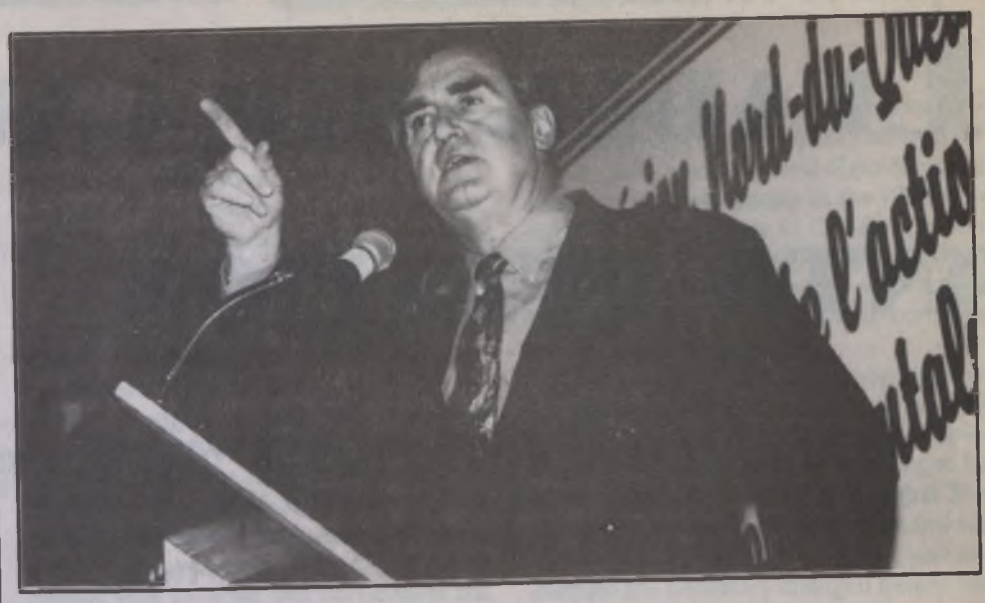
Benessahraoui refused to release a copy of the personnel regulations. However, a copy obtained by *The Nation* fixes a bonus of "$1,800 (Cdn) in the case of the assistant directors" per year. Dorlot in fact received $9,000 last year, according to the documents obtained by *The Nation*.

The payments seem to contradict federal and international norms on loaned-out civil servants. It's unusual for such employees to see their pay topped off by the agency or department where they were loaned.

"You can't be adding one (income) to another. It's either one or the other," said Michel Papineau, assistant secretary of labour relations at the federal Treasury Board.

"You can't say you'll use the benefits of both sides. Otherwise, folks would be cherry-picking."

The Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization agrees. "Certainly the practice here is that the salary is not topped off," said ICAO spokesman Denis Chagnon. "This is standard United Nations policy. There is no addition to any salary of a civil servant from any country."



"No Dam Way," Innu tell Bouchard

It wasn't too long ago that Premier Lucien Bouchard was going around saying that no hydro projects will be built without the consent of the First Nations.

This month, Bouchard experienced what has been called the most humiliating moment of his career when Innu protesters disrupted his announcement of the $12-billion Churchill Falls II hydro project. The nation's media were there to record all the grisly details.

About 100 Innu surrounded a van carrying Bouchard and Newfoundland Premier Brian Tobin, forcing them to get out and talked to the Innu about the project for the first time.

Half an hour later, they still couldn't convince the protesters to let them pass. They got back in their van and waited for an hour helplessly while the Innu paraded around, banging on the doors and beating drums.

Children were also involved, with some toddlers carrying protest signs that were nearly as big as them. One young boy wrote, "No Dam Way," with his finger in the dust on the van. An entourage of 14 planeloads of journalists, businesspeople, politicians and officials looked on.

Finally, Bouchard and Tobin got out of the van and started the long walk back to the airport, several kilometres away. As they proceeded down an icy, snow-covered road, Tobin holding Bouchard's elbow, the protesters followed them chanting, "Go home, go home."

The embarassing images were all over the news that night and the front pages of the next day's papers.

"It turned out really successful," said Paul Rich, chief of the Innu community of Sheshatshiu. "We wanted to show them that this is Innu land and it's not for sale."

Rich said the Innu people have suffered enough from the Lower Churchill Falls project of the late 1960s, which they never consented to. They want compensation first for that project and settlement of their land claim before any new development is even considered, he said.

"We're not saying the Innu are only interested in money. But we know we can't unflood it. We can't reverse it because everything is devastated."

While there has not yet been a community resolution on the new project, Rich said he believes his people are against it. "We're just looking at stopping the whole project. It's too close to our communities."

Rich said Quebec and Newfoundland are ignoring recent court decisions like the Delgamuukw Supreme Court case which support First Nations rights.

Media coverage on Churchill Falls II has been skeptical, especially critical of the fact that the power is not needed in Quebec and is destined for export at a loss to the U.S.

The Montreal Gazette's editorial entitled, "Red flags at Churchill Falls," noted that the Americans will pay only about 3 cents a kilowatt-hour while the cost will be 4.4 cents.

In another surprising development, HQ president Andre Caille said the utility is "lucky" the Great Whale project didn't go through as originally proposed. Great Whale's electricity would have cost 6 cents per kilowatt-hour, double what the U.S. market will pay.

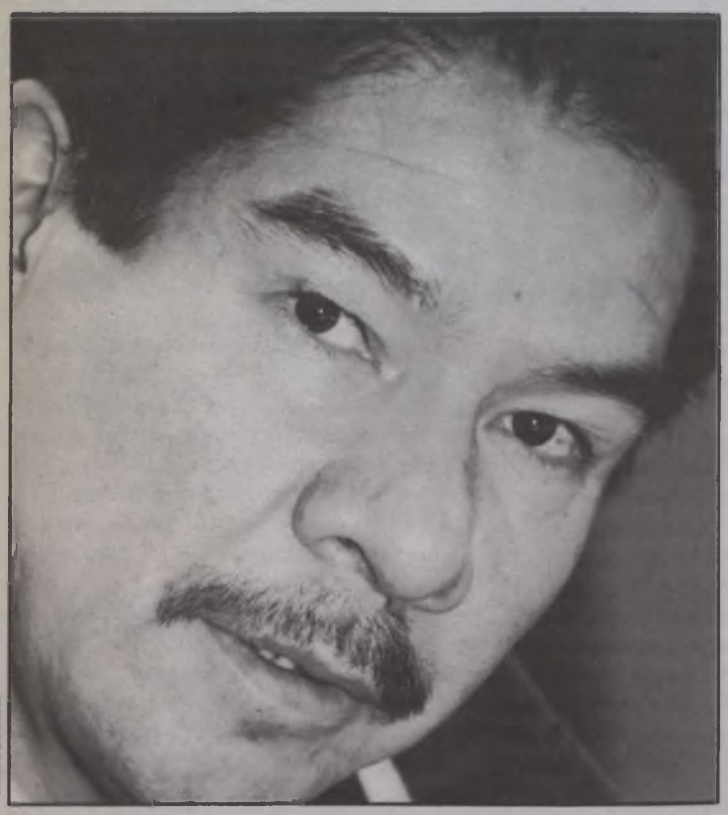
-Alex Roslin

(with files from The Montreal Gazette)

LEADERSHIP CALLED INTO QUESTION

"We urge that a moratorium be placed over the talks with Hydro-Quebec and Quebec."

Dear Matthew:



Chief Matthew Mukash of Whampagoostui wrote this letter to Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come on March 11. It raises many questions about the direction of the Cree Nation.

"The letter was meant to spark some debate, not to discredit anybody," Mukash explained.

He discusses the Cree Nation Government, the Great Whale project and fears that Crees jeopardized their rights in the MOU agreement with Quebec. "It seems that we as leaders are somewhat negligent of the vision and voice of our people."

I am writing on behalf of the Whapmagoostui First Nation (WFN) following the WFN Council's review of important issues that we envisage will certainly adversely affect present and future generations in our community, as well as the Cree Nation as a whole.

While the WFN recognizes the need for the Cree Nation to pursue programs that we are entitled to under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), subsequent complementary agreements and under other government programs, we wish to state our concerns with respect to present negotiations with the federal government and Quebec as well as other related issues. We feel that these might eventually damage and jeopardize our opportunity as a Nation to gain total control of our future as contemplated in the 1995 Declarations of Principles for self-determination.

It seems that we as leaders are somewhat negligent of the Vision and Voice of our people as reflected in the 1996 report of the Eeyou Estchee Commission. In regard to this concern, we wish to state the following:

1996 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EEYOU ESTCHEE (ISTCHEE) COMMISSION (EEC)

As you are probably aware, the WFN is in the process of mapping out and defining our traditional territory. Once this is done, a statement will follow declaring ourselves as a people and formally reaffirming our rights over the extent of our territory (those that Quebec and Canada claim were extinguished in 1975). This process is in line with the recommendations of the Eeyou Estchee Commission in its report of 1996. It is in regard to these recommendations and subsequent mandates given to the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) that we wish to state our concerns.

In October 1995, at a Special General Assembly of the Cree Nation of Chisasibi, we decided as Eeyouch to begin a process of nation-building with a main objective of restructuring and reorganizing the Cree Nation Government. This was proposed so that we would make every effort to have structures in place to be able to have a political body that represents the Cree Nation as a whole and over the full extent of Eeyou Istchee. At the time, we felt it urgent to undertake this process as part of our response to the Quebec independence issue.

After having held public hearings in the Cree communities, the EEC in 1996 published its report called: "Self-determination: The Voice of a Nation and People on Eeyou and Eeyou

Estchee." This document makes a number of recommendations that reflect the will of the Eeyouch as a people with respect to self-determination and self-governance. I recount some of those recommendations as they have a direct bearing on the matters raised here:

1) Eeyou of Eeyou Estchee should maintain and continue to act in solidarity and unity to achieve particular aspirations and goals and benefit from the power of common beliefs and mission. Such a process enables collective decision-making and collective action and facilitates Eeyou empowerment.

2) Eeyou should encourage and promote direct participation of all Eeyou, particularly youth, women and trappers, in the decision-making process of Eeyou.

3) As a goal, Eeyou of Eeyou Estchee must seek and achieve political self-empowerment, at the local and regional (national) level, through self-reliance, vision and faith.

4) Eeyou of Eeyou Estchee, as a nation and as a people, must ensure their direct and meaningful participation in any process that affects rights, status and interests of Eeyou as well as we the determination of the status and future of Eeyou Estchee.

With regard to the above, we now ask: When will this process of redefining the structure and organization of Cree government begin? It seems to us that the Cree leadership is not moving, or possibly even moving in the opposite direction with respect to the will of our people as reflected in the 1996 EEC report.

We wish to raise, among others, certain issues that we perceive to be of utmost importance that may, down the road, get in the way of achieving the goals and aspirations of the Eeyouch with respect to self-determination and self-governance. These issues are the following:

QUEBEC NEGOTIATIONS/ MOU IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT WITH QUEBEC

With regard to the negotiations with Quebec to be concluded under the 1995 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), we are very much concerned about a number of aspects. In particular we feel that Issue 5 of the current draft agreement is at best premature and should be removed. This clause sets out a frontal attack on the Cree institutions by stating that the review to be done will be for the purpose of bringing non-Natives (most probably from the Radissonie group) into the institutions set up to protect Cree rights.

You will also note that the Cree institutions are to be reviewed to make them more efficient and perhaps even to abolish them. In contrast, SDBJ and SEBJ will only be reviewed in regard to what they are doing now. It is notable that Hydro-Quebec is not on the list. If there is to be a review of institutions and entities, why are Quebec's institutions not also subject to elimination? Moreover, it has been evident in the Great Whale review that Quebec and particularly the Radissonie Group has wanted to take the review committees apart. This is important to note.

We believe that the Cree Nation cannot let Quebec even begin to think we would accept such a review of Cree institutions with their streamlining or even elimination in mind. These Cree institutions were a negotiated response in 1975 to the flooding of our lands, purported extinguishment of our rights in and to our lands, and the invasion of Canada and Quebec government authority into Eeyou Istchee. The WFN is not under any illusions that our Cree institutions as outlined in the JBNQA and subject to attack under this MOU draft document are a complete response to Cree needs and self-determination. In fact they are not, and this is why there needs to be a full approach to developing a Cree national government and self-determination as mentioned here.

We find it rather disturbing that non-Crees are being invited now to participate in determining the future of the Eeyouch and our institutions. With regard to this matter, we ask: Why is this item coming up for negotiation in this way and at this time? Who exactly will benefit from such a process of review leading to abolition of our treaty rights to these institutions?

It is especially inappropriate for us to permit the Quebec negotiations to determine the future of the Cree institutions, particularly when the process is so weighted in the favour of Quebec. It is especially the case when we have not consulted with our people on the nature of the process and, more importantly, when we do not even have a consensus among ourselves on what it is we want out of any reorganization of the Cree government. Our reorganization must be conducted by us, and not at some table with Quebec or any other government.

It seems that we are heading toward selling out the basic opportunities that we have toward gaining total control of our future as understood by our people as the 1995 Special General Assembly in Chisasibi, in exchange for a few "tangible results" which do not really address the needs of our future generations in the long-run. This, certainly, merits serious thought.

With regard to the Quebec negotiations, we request as an absolute minimum that Issue 5 be removed from the proposed implementation agreement if we are going to be serious about signing it with Quebec. This has been discussed by the WFN Council at a meeting of yesterday. We ask that you undertake the necessary changed before the date of the signing which we understand is next week, and bring this matter to the Cree people to be discussed first before a final decision is made.

CREE/HYDRO-QUEBEC TASK FORCE

As you know, several articles in The Nation have come out for public consumption regarding the activities of the task force. It is evident that Hydro-Quebec is openly stating that the Crees are willing to participate through investments and other arrangements in future development projects. Talking to the media about these matters is no doubt deliberately done by the officials at Hydro-Quebec to take advantage of the fact The Nation is widely distributed across Canada and in the United States. This clearly undermines the position of the Cree Nation with respect to the proposed GWR diversion plan by Hydro-Quebec and other development projects on Eeyou Istchee.

On my trip to the Eastern United States in November 1997, I was often confronted with questions as to why the Crees are negotiating with Hydro-Quebec on future development projects. It came as a surprise to me that references were made to the activities of the HQ/Cree task force, whose mandate had not yet been defined at the time.

While we understand that this task force was created to settle past obligations of Hydro-Quebec toward the Crees, we would like to see a clear mandate established. It has always been our concern that while we consider ourselves as a strong nation, we are still talking with a multinational corporation whose role is clearly to undermine our strength. Negotiations with Hydro-Que-

see page 12

bec, as you know, imply that we recognize its jurisdiction over Eeyou Istchee on resource development and other matters. This needs to be taken into consideration seriously as we move toward self-determination.

RESOURCE/REVENUE SHARING AGREEMENTS WITH QUEBEC

Again, the idea of resource and revenue-sharing negotiations with Hydro-Quebec, Quebec or Canada without a clear understanding of the ownership status of land and resources within Eeyou Istchee is premature and, indeed, an issue that needs clarification before we move on in this direction, if we are going to. We have an understanding that, unfortunately, the preliminary discussions on these matters are being discussed (with a multinational corporation) at the level of the Cree/Hydro-Quebec task force. This, needless to say, is quite disturbing.

In regard to this matter, we urge that a moratorium be placed over the talks with Hydro-Quebec and Quebec, until the Eeyouch have reaffirmed our full control of the resources over the full extent of Eeyou Istchee in a declaration as proposed last summer at the General Assembly in Ouje-Bougoumou. As you know, this was a follow-up statement to the results of the 1995/96 Eeyou Istchee Commission public process which called for Cree control of the land, water and other resources within Eeyou Istchee.

FEDERAL NEGOTIATIONS

The federal negotiations are another issue that we feel merit careful attention and scrutiny. We received a delegation of the Cree federal negotiations team under the direction of Dr. Ted Moses in Whampagoostui recently. While there is clearly an effort underway to ensure that Cree priorities are at the centre of this process, we need to know that this really be the way these negotiations are going to be done. We want to be assured that when there is a proposal for a new relationship, our negotiators will be mandated to ensure that there will be no eventual abolition of our rights, and that we will go forwards rather than backwards.

Like the Quebec negotiations, any absence at this point in time of a comprehensive set of principles of negotiation will, if not remedied, certainly have implications on the status of Cree rights and freedoms over the long-term. We state this as we are well aware of the process undertaken by the federal government via DIAND with respect to the Manitoba Flood Agreement which resembles the JBNQA in context, spirit and intent. As you probably know, over the years DIAND has systematically and successfully gained ground in having the government's obligations signed off by the beneficiaries of that agreement. When this happens, the benefits that future generations are entitled to under the agreement are taken away. Thus, the government gets closest to succeeding in promoting total assimilation of the concerned Native populations into the Canadian mainstream political systems. The question, therefore, is: Do we really want in any way to head in this direction?

With regard to these negotiations, we need to be sure that our overall strategy, again, is strong and consistent with our fundamental goals as a nation to be self-governing. We seem to always be agreeable to "playing along" toward our own demise as a people by entering into agreements that compromise Cree rights. We must be sure at this time that our "negotiations" do not contribute to this. This needs careful attention.

THE JAMES BAY AND NORTHERN QUEBEC AGREEMENT AS A TREATY?

For many years now, the Cree Nation leadership has talked about revisiting the JBNQA. This has not happened. As a legal and political instrument that sets out our present relationships with governments and their agencies, the Whapmagoostui First Nation has the following problems with it:

First, the Native parties are forced to recognize not only the jurisdiction of the provincial government over our territory and over the resources therein, but we are also forced to recognize that of the crown corporations such as Hydro-Quebec, SDBJ, SEBJ, among others. Secondly, since the JBNQA is simply an administrative arrangement between the Native parties and governments, it does not, in our view, meet the status of a nation-to-nation treaty. Although the courts seem to recognize it as such, the Cree Nation should not, and for many reasons. We believe that our treaty rights (if we can use the term) under the JBNQA are in need of a fundamental change. The only way to do this is to declare ourselves as a people and in our own language as previously stated.

With respect to status of the JBNQA, the WFN sees the agreement, because of its ambiguous nature, as a way for government to eventually do away with our rights and the long-term benefits that our future generations would be entitled to - as is presently being done (by the same people we are negotiating with) with respect to the Manitoba Flood Agreement out west.

We, therefore, urge that a thorough review of the agreement in all of its provisions be undertaken by the Crees as soon as possible, and in accordance with Cree values. This review should strictly be internal to the Cree Nation. Only then (if the result of such a review is satisfactory to the Cree Nation) should it be entered into with the other parties to the agreement. The work involved in this regard should begin immediately.

In addition to the concerns mentioned up to this point in this letter, we would also like to point out other matters that threaten Cree rights over Eeyou Istchee over time. These are: the proposed establishment of national parks in the territory, development centres, regional ski-doo races (Harricana, etc.), and the like. Many of these come in the guise of invitations to Cree parties to participate and even invest in economic development projects in the territory, including mining and forestry. All of these and more are promoted to benefit non-Crees. These matters do pose a danger to Cree rights and may limit our opportunity to taking full control of Eeyou Istchee over the long-term, as this has been the experience of Native peoples in other parts of North America.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUES AT HAND

It is our view that an underlying issue with respect to the matters raised here is: Negotiation vs. Nation-building. We wish to clarify our point on this matter.

"Negotiation" in our view can often imply that we must give up in order to receive. In the context of the present negotiation, we are agreeing (though perhaps with strict reservation) to the terms and conditions as set forth in the JBNQA, including extinguishment. However, despite our claim that our rights were never extinguished, the

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LONG AGO...

Edward is my name. Edward Gilpin. I am 75 years old.

Long ago, I didn't see extreme hardship. There was never a day when I didn't eat. But my mother, she was the one who told stories. She was raised inland. She told of the stories of when she was there.

There were always times when the people didn't have anything to eat. When a man left to go hunting, there were times when he didn't return because of starvation. When the people went to go to him, there were times when they didn't reach him in time. He had already died. There were also times when the people did bring him back alive. She told of stories of things happening like that many times, during the extreme hardships when the people were not eating.

My mother said, "We used to live in a large teepee with many people. When we ate ptarmigan, I wasn't allowed to eat all of the part that was given to me to eat. I was given the back bone with one thigh attached of a partridge. I was only allowed to eat some of it in the morning and to save the rest for later. That was how difficult it was over there."

My father never told stories like that. The people here on the coast didn't have much hardship. This was where my father was raised. His father too was raised from the coast. He didn't tell much stories of hardship from the lack of food.

I heard my mother telling stories of a man not returning when he left to go hunting when the people were starving and didn't have anything to eat. Many times, I heard how difficult it was for them before there was anything around that the white man uses. I guess there were occasions when they tasted white man food. She said that during the hardship and when some of the men weren't able to walk, it was their wives that pulled them on toboggans on their nomadic travels. The hardships that my mother used to tell about, I don't think she told us all. She didn't want to tell us about the real hard times for a reason. The extreme hardship, she deliberately left it out of her stories.

Can I ask you about how the animals are regarded and how they are to be respected?

Long ago, the people really must have respected the animals. The young people of today don't have much respect for the animals The elders of long ago who lived off the animals really respected them. The young people of today don't do it exactly of how the elders did it long ago.

The elders long ago didn't use white people's food. They survived from the animals. That was why they respected them. They treated it like a garden - just like someone tending their garden. They didn't want to kill off everything but to be sure to leave some of the animals. Today, the young people hunt wherever they want to. There is noone hunting inland. They all hunt here on the coast. Long ago, they valued everything. They didn't waste anything. They remembered that there was going to be another winter.

The thing that the people of long ago valued the most was big

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game - moose, caribou and bear. They didn't want to leave anything lying around. And waterfowl, they didn't regard it as nothing. All the edible parts, they kept. The elders today still respect the things as they did long ago. The young people seem to just throw away what the people used to survive on long ago because they value the things from the white man more. They are not shy to just kill something and just throw it away. The elders didn't allow that to happen. They wanted the kill to be used entirely.

Today, none of the bones are saved. After they broke the bones from the big game that they had killed, they hung them. They broke the bones to make broth. This was where they got fat also. The bones they didn't break such as the shoulder blade, they hung those in respect. This was after they made broth from it. The bones that they broke and boiled, they still hung them. They placed the crushed bones on a scaffold. Other people put them in the water. The people long ago didn't want anything to be thrown away. They didn't want anything to be just lying around.

The people believed that the animals gave themselves to be eaten. When the animals see that they are not respected, they don't give themselves. It seems the animals just disappear. Today, the young people don't respect it that much. Long ago, they kept everything when harvesting water fowl. It was only the bones and the feathers that they didn't keep. They cared for everything. Today, we are very shocked to hear things. Many times I hear of things that are thrown out at the dump - even when it is edible. The young people don't want to eat it. They should it give to the elders so they can eat it. The elders who were raised on that kind of food, don't really care for the store-bought food. They prefer to eat what they were raised on. Even though I like eating store-bought food, it seems that I put it down to return to the food that I was raised on. It seems that my body needs it because I was raised on it.

Today the songs are not used but the people used them for hunting long ago. I don't remember them being used. I only heard my father which he used to hear from the elders long ago. He used to mimic their songs they sung. He was stealing their songs. But I don't remember them being in use. But my parents saw them when they were in use. The people long ago had songs for the big game they hunted. They sang about everything. Even trying to catch beaver and the things used. They sang about the beaver hunt. They sang about everything.

I hunted here on the coast. I saw this land many times. I saw it all when I was hunting on the coast. I was very active when I was young. When the inland people came to get supplies, I followed them. I lived with the people. That was how I saw the land.

When I was born, the company manager was probably around. I don't think there was a minister that stayed permanently over where we were. He just came occasionally, arriving by boat. He paddled in. When I was already a bit wise, that was when the minister was here. He came from Moosonee. He was Cree - a Moosonee Cree. He was very old. My mother talked about the first one that was around. He was in Chisasibi. She called him Mr. Walton. That was who she remembered being around first.

The company store manager that I first remember here was Cree. He was from Chisasibi. Oliver Louttit is the first one I remember. And over there at the French store, the first one I remember was a Cree manager. He was from Waswanipi. His name was Georgie Elton. Those were the first ones I remember. I don't think there were many managers to go around for those Cree ones to be here.

CONGRATULATIONS,
winners
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NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Your outstanding accomplishments and talents give us all a reason to feel proud. In the process of pursuing your dreams, you have won the respect and admiration of your communities and all Canadians.

Please accept my congratulations on winning the National Aboriginal Achievement Award. You are being recognized not only for your individual achievements, but also for your contributions in helping to strengthen Aboriginal communities across Canada. Gathering Strength -- Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan identified this as an important priority and challenged all Canadians to help make a difference.

To the National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, thank you for once again organizing this exciting event. We are pleased that the spirit which founded the awards five years ago continues through this, the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

Jane Stewart

The Honourable Jane Stewart, P.C., M.P.

Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

Ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien

CANADA

John Amagoalik, *Inuit leader*

Chief Abel Bosum, *Northern Quebec Cree leader*

Tantoo Cardinal, *actor*

Wade Cachagee, *entrepreneur*

Joe and Josephine Crowshoe, *Elders of the Peigan Nation*

Tagak Curley, *Inuit leader*

Georges Erasmus, *Co-Chair of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*

Dr. Emily Jane Faries, *educator*

His Excellency Dan Goodleaf, *Canada's Ambassador to Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras*

Roberta Jamieson, *Ontario's Ombudsman*

Daphne Odjig, *visual artist*

Buffy Sainte-Marie, *Academy Award winner, singer, songwriter and humanitarian*

Bryan Trottier, *Stanley Cup-winning hockey player*

Dr. Cornelia Wieman, *psychiatrist*

Statement *of* Reconciliation

Learning from the Past

As Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians seek to move forward together in a process of renewal, it is essential that we deal with the legacies of the past affecting the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including the First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Our purpose is not to rewrite history but, rather, to learn from our past and to find ways to deal with the negative impacts that certain historical decisions continue to have in our society today.

The ancestors of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples lived on this continent long before explorers from other continents first came to North America. For thousands of years before this country was founded, they enjoyed their own forms of government. Diverse, vibrant Aboriginal nations had ways of life rooted in fundamental values concerning their relationships to the Creator, the environment, and each other, in the role of Elders as the living memory of their ancestors, and in their responsibilities as custodians of the lands, waters and resources of their homelands.

The assistance and spiritual values of the Aboriginal peoples who welcomed the newcomers to this continent too often have been forgotten. The contributions made by all Aboriginal peoples to Canada's development, and the contributions that they continue to make to our society today, have not been properly acknowledged. The Government of Canada today, on behalf of all Canadians, acknowledges those contributions.

Sadly, our history with respect to the treatment of Aboriginal people is not something in which we can take pride. Attitudes of racial and cultural superiority led to a suppression of Aboriginal culture and values. As a country, we are burdened by past actions that resulted in weakening the identity of Aboriginal peoples, suppressing their languages and cultures, and outlawing spiritual practices. We must recognize the impact of these actions on the once self-sustaining nations that were disaggregated, disrupted, limited or even destroyed by the dispossession of traditional territory, by the relocation of Aboriginal people, and by some provisions of the Indian Act. We must acknowledge that the result of these actions was the erosion of the political, economic and social systems of Aboriginal people and nations.

Against the backdrop of these historical legacies, it is a remarkable tribute to the strength and endurance of Aboriginal people that they have maintained their historic diversity and identity. The Government of Canada today formally expresses to all Aboriginal people in Canada our profound regret for past actions of the federal government which have contributed to these difficult pages in the history of our relationship together.

One aspect of our relationship with Aboriginal people over this period that requires particular attention is the Residential School system. This system separated many children from their families and communities and prevented them from speaking their own languages and from learning about their heritage and cultures. In the worst cases, it left legacies of personal pain and distress that continue to reverberate in Aboriginal communities to this day. Tragically, some children were the victims of physical and sexual abuse.

The Government of Canada acknowledges the role it played in the development and administration of these schools. Particularly to those individuals who experienced the tragedy of sexual and physical abuse at residential schools, and who have carried this burden believing that in some way they must be responsible, we wish to emphasize that what you experienced was not your fault and should never have happened. To those of you who suffered this tragedy at residential schools, we are deeply sorry.

In dealing with the legacies of the Residential School system, the Government of Canada proposes to work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, the Churches and other interested parties to resolve the longstanding issues that must be addressed. We need to work together on a healing strategy to assist individuals and communities in dealing with the consequences of this sad era of our history.

No attempt at reconciliation with Aboriginal people can be complete without reference to the sad events culminating in the death of Métis leader Louis Riel. These events cannot be undone; however, we can and will continue to look for ways of affirming the contributions of Métis people in Canada and of reflecting Louis Riel's proper place in Canada's history.

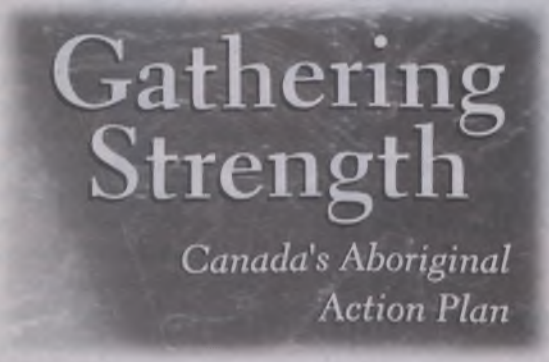
Reconciliation is an ongoing process. In renewing our partnership, we must ensure that the mistakes which marked our past relationship are not repeated. The Government of Canada recognizes that policies that sought to assimilate Aboriginal people, women and men, were not the way to build a strong country. We must instead continue to find ways in which Aboriginal people can participate fully in the economic, political, cultural and social life of Canada in a manner which preserves and enhances the collective identities of Aboriginal communities, and allows them to evolve and flourish in the future. Working together to achieve our shared goals will benefit all Canadians, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike.

On behalf of the Government of Canada

THE HONOURABLE JANE STEWART, P.C., M.P.
MINISTER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

THE HONOURABLE RALPH GOODALE, P.C., M.P.
FEDERAL INTERLOCUTOR FOR MÉTIS AND NON-STATUS INDIANS

On January 7, 1998, the federal government unveiled *Gathering Strength -- Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* to renew its relationship with Aboriginal people in Canada. *Gathering Strength* was presented by Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Jane Stewart, together with the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Ralph Goodale. The spirit behind the plan is one of reconciliation, healing and renewal. Its aim is to build a joint plan for the future between Aboriginal people and the federal government. Its success depends on the participation of Aboriginal people, the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, the private sector and Canadians as a whole.



When?

Gathering Strength is an action plan that begins now. It sets long-term objectives but also focusses on short-term results that will bring real and meaningful change to the everyday lives of Aboriginal people. It is about taking steps today to give Aboriginal people — particularly Aboriginal youth and children — the promise of a better tomorrow.

What?

Gathering Strength is a renewal of our relationship with Aboriginal people. It is based on: recognizing past mistakes and injustices; commencing reconciliation, healing and renewal; and building a joint plan for the future. The report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples tells us that significant changes in the relationship between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people are urgently required. The Government of Canada agrees.

Who?

The success of *Gathering Strength* will depend on the determination of the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments and the private sector working with Aboriginal people. The challenges faced by Aboriginal people and communities cannot be addressed by governments — federal, Aboriginal, provincial, territorial, municipal — or associations acting in isolation from one another.

Why?

Conditions in Aboriginal communities generally are much worse than those of their non-Aboriginal neighbours. Many Aboriginal communities lack the appropriate institutions, resources and expertise needed to deal effectively with such serious problems as rates of infant mortality, youth suicide, unemployment and dependence on social assistance which are higher than the national average.

Our goal is to work closely with Aboriginal people and other partners on a variety of issues aimed at providing the appropriate tools to build the means and capacity to effect social change.

How?

While the problems are complex, the plan's approach is not. At the heart of the Action Plan is a commitment to address the needs of communities by building real partnerships with Aboriginal people, including the development of mechanisms to recognize sustainable and accountable Aboriginal governments and institutions. An essential aspect is the need to work closely together to define this partnership and shape a common vision of the relationship between us.

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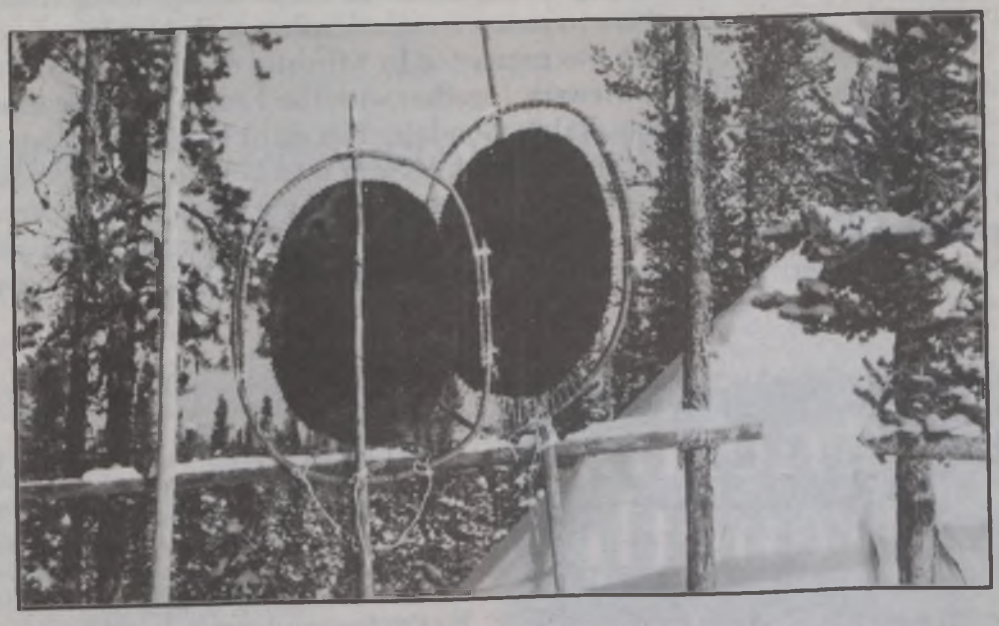

Working together to implement the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

The Grand Council/Cree Regional Authority is working together with the Cree Trappers Association to implement the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

For years the Cree have paid for the majority of the costs of operating the Association. No Assessment has ever been done by Canada or Quebec on the costs of fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement. Now the Cree Trappers Association, the Grand Council/Cree Regional Authority, the Quebec Ministry of the Environment and Wildlife, the Quebec Secretariat of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs are undertaking a review of what is necessary.

In the first stage the parties set up a working committee to review the operation of the Association to date. As a result of this there is now substantial agreement on the core operational functions and associated costs. The main outstanding question in this regard is to determine the costs of certain functions undertaken to date by the Association without any renumeration from Canada or Quebec.

Once this is completed, the parties will assess the costs of the programs required to undertake the transportation, communication, land management, and commercial mandate set out in the Agreement and in the objects of the Association. It is expected that this work will be completed in the coming months.

GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES
(EEYOU ASTCHEE)

CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY

CNC welcomes back an old hand

by William Nicholls

Richard Saunders is the new interim Chairman of the Cree-Naskapi Commission until Judge Paul returns to duty. Saunders was a former commissioner from 1986 to 1992.

He readily admitted there is a backlog in the Commission's responses to complaints because there weren't any commissioners for a while. Saunders said the backlog resulted in a slowdown in preparing this year's report to the Canadian Parliament, due on June 5.

He said one of the difficulties in preparing the report is that it ends up being in four different languages.

He said they have managed to hold hearings in most of the communities as well as a hearing in Ottawa.

In Ouje-Bougoumou, while the Band Council has made its submission, there will be a community public hearing on April 7th, Waswanipi on the 8th and Wemindji Band Members will be heard on the April 9th.

Saunders said one of the themes he is seeing throughout the Cree territory is defining the role of the Cree justice system. Saunders said one of the complaints is that the circuit courts come through only periodically.

This means there are long delays between being charged for an offense and actually going to trial.

Other justice problems cited by the communities are that Cree police only have jurisdiction in Category I lands.

Saunders said offenses might take place across the road, in the bush or whatever but the Cree police can't do anything about it except to wait for the SQ to show up. Another delay in time.

Mediation is another common theme. Saunders said the communities are asking that the Commission play a role in mediating disputes.

"As you know there are quite a few lawsuits between various Cree Bands and entities, primarily government," said Saunders. He said mediation doesn't require the time and expense of the courts to be resolved.

Saunders pointed out that the level of trust displayed by the Cree communities in the Commission was understandable. The Crees choose and then Ottawa approves. Saunders was quite frank saying that in the past relations between the Commission and Ottawa have been tested at times.

"Certainly there have been serious difficulties between ourselves and the previous ministers," said Saunders, adding that the present situation was fine.

When the first report was given to Indian Affairs back in 1986, he said, "the department spent a great deal of time trying to discredit the commissioners personally."

Saunders said the Feds weren't happy with the findings. At the time one of the decisions of the Commission was in favour of the Crees. Proof that the Commission was not just another Trojan Horse for the Crees.

Saunders said he's pleased with the latest Indian Affairs Minister. She's "interested in dealing with issues (rather) than just positions," he said.

Saunders said he finds the role of the CNC to be more than just policing the Cree governments. He says Grand Chief Coon Come has seen the CNC as "kind of an ombudsman role."

It's more than just the Crees' but also the federal government's and its agencies' role in implementing the Cree-Naskapi Act, explained Saunders.

On the forestry issues and the Cree forestry court case, Saunders remarked, "It's unfortunate that it has to go to court but the truth of the matter is the Crees have been attempting for some time to resolve it through negotiations. It's not making very much progress and they know that the federal government has no alternative but to listen when the courts make a decision."

He said the Crees were forced into this position and have no other options.

We discussed the Cree concern over the offshore islands. The Cree leadership would like the CNC to be involved in mediating the issue, Saunders said. The problem is the islands are not a part of Quebec, he said.

The islands are considered part of the Northwest Territories. The JBNQA only covered lands within Quebec. The traditional Cree rights still exist for those islands, said Saunders.

"On the islands you still have 100 per cent Cree rights," he said. He added that the extinguishment clause in the JBNQA did not apply to those islands.

Saunders said the Cree claims also apply to the water and the seabeds underneath the islands. "It's a pretty substantial claim," remarked Saunders.

He said that with the rise in development in the North, it is in the Cree interest that the claims be recognized in a formal way. The CNC report to the Canadian Parliament will mention this issue, according to Saunders.

In a recent meeting with the Minister of Indian Affairs, Jane Stewart, she indicated to Saunders that her department would have no trouble with the CNC having a greater role in the Cree communities. To help with this the CNC budget and mandate could be increased in the fiscal year 1999-2000.

"She didn't give any guarantees but she indicated she thought we should be doing more. She acknowledged that more probably meant more money," said Saunders.

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- Cree School Board Post Secondary Offices in Montreal (1-800-463-7402) and Hull (1-800-567-9667)

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Montreal, Quebec
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1-800-463-7402
514-878-9995

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Journey to wellness

This story is from a student at Mistissini Adult Education.

As you may know by now, Natives were said to have a lot of alcohol-related problems. But sooner or later, these people will want to quit living in this kind of lifestyle. So where do they go for help? They go to the treatment centres down south. Most of the time, they return back to stay sober for a couple of weeks or months, then they return to the old lifestyle.

In our community there have been quite a few people who have gone to these treatments. A few have remaineded sober. Then there's the case of the people who really want to quit, who are seeking help. The Elders had only one solution for them. The plan was to take them on a journey, which would start from Nitchequan, located 420 kilometres north of Mistissini. They would try and travel on foot and get here in our community. Remember, they only have the basic foods that people had back then, like tea, flour, sugar and of course their snowshoes.

We all know that in the bush there is healing. I mean there's a lot of peace and you don't have to worry about anything. Your mind is just basically enjoying the beauty of nature. So if you're completely stressed out you'll know where to go. But I would recommend you have a guide with you. I wouldn't want you to get lost in the bush.

Now back to my topic. The only time they'll be able to eat meat is when they kill game. I heard that there will be a celebration when these four men arrive in our community. I forgot to mention that they are escorted by an Elder. In conclusion, I believe that if you admit you have a serious problem, you have to seek a way to try and help yourself. And this is one way they have found out through our Elders. For them this trip only teaches them how hard it will be going on this journey of wellness.

Ancestral journey

By James Alfred Gunner

Everyone in Mistissini knows me as Jimmy Gunners. I am deeply concerned about wellness for the Elders of the Cree Nation of Mistissini. I have a dream to make an ancestral journey, snowshoeing the land of our grandmothers and grandfathers, with a hope of reaching out to you to pursue wellness for our Elders.

Those who will travel with me on this journey are Kenny Wapachee, Jessie Blacksmith and Earl Longchap. We all share the same ancestral root of Cree Nation of Mistissini.

This journey is defined as a journey of wellness. This journey is dedicated in loving memory of Maggie Longchap (the mother of my wife Kathleen) and to the Elders of the Cree Nation of Mistissini.

The primary intention of this journey is to raise funds for an Elders' home in Mistissini so that care for Elders may be provided by our own people. As Elders customarily tell countless stories of a way of life, these stories begin to unfold a message about caring - caring for the precious gift of life, even life at old age. I know we share the same dream to care that we may find strength to survive in a way of life.

The hope of this journey is to pursue wellness. Each participant on this journey desires to discover wellness, peace, self-respect, dignity and to resist the drift of dependence on drugs and alcohol.

The opportunity of this journey is to experience a distinct culture of our Elders and to discover what it takes to survive and contribute to a nation.

Now, most importantly, I want to encourage you also to pursue wellness, continue to show compassion for the Elders and financially contribute to the construction of an Elders' home. Your participation demonstrates your generosity and that you really care. Thank you very much.

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Issue No. 5

Issues with respect to regional authorities

It is known as "Issue No. 5." It is the last section of the $15-million agreement between the Crees and Quebec and it has caused a lot of controversy in the Cree Nation. It gives Quebec and the Cree negotiator, Chief Billy Diamond, the right to review all the Cree entities and discuss streamlining some and abolishing others.

Why are the Cree leaders giving Quebec a say in deciding the future of Cree institutions? Shouldn't Crees first decide their priorities themselves?

These are the concerns Ted Moses, Matthew Mukash and James Bobbish have raised. Below are excerpts from the Cree-Quebec agreement, Ted Moses' letter and Chief Diamond's responses (p. 27).

CONTENTS

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) created or contemplated a large number of organisms, authorities, committees or institutions devoted to allowing for the implementation of its provisions.

It is the opinion of Quebec and the Crees that the time has come to review the status, vocation, operations and even the necessity of maintaining the various bodies, and in particular, to do this with a view to increasing their efficiency and reduce their number, although at the same time supporting, to the extent possible, the development of a partnership between the Crees and the non-Native citizens in the region. After examination, recommendations could be made that certain authorities could be either abolished, combined with others, or have their mandates changed.

The Government of Canada and/or other parties could, as the case may be, be parties to these discussions.

The principal authorities created or established relating to the Crees and Quebec pursuant to the JBNQA and various Complementary Agreements are; the James Bay Eeyou Company (Complementary Agreement no. 7), the landholding corporations, the Cree village municipalities, the Cree Regional Authority, the James Bay Regional Zone Council, the Cree Board of Heath and Social Services, the Cree School Board, the advisory committees on police and justice, the James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment, COMEX, COMEV, the Hunting Fishing and Trapping Coordinating Committee, the James Bay Native Development Corporation, the Cree Trappers Association, the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association, the Cree Arts and Crafts Association, the Joint Economic and Community Development Committee, as well as the Cree Hunters and Trappers Income Security Board. In addition to the authorities created by the Agreement, the mandates of certain of the signatories of the Agreement (e.g. SEBJ and JBDC) may also have evolved with time. The vocation of all these authorities could be examined as well.

MEASURES PROPOSED

The Steering and Coordination Committee will determine the way in which Quebec and the Crees will structure the necessary discussions to deal with this matter.

The discussions in regard to this issue shall take into account the following factors;

- the provisions of the JBNQA and the necessity of having to enter into Complementary Agreements;
- Government initiatives;
- Cree initiatives;
- the apporpriateness of involving other parties, if necessary.
- the impact on existing legislation

4. PARALLEL NEGOTIATIONS

The two Parties do not object in any way to negotiations taking place that are not provided for either in the Memorandum of Understanding of 1995 or in the present Implementation Agreement, and that are not part of the process established hereunder. These parallel negotiations could deal in particular, but without limitation, with the issues listed in the various progress reports prepared by either party. The Coordination and Steering Committee should be kept up to date on the progess of these negotiations."

Ted Moses writes:

The final draft of the above-titled agreement (Cree-Quebec MOU) has now come to my attention. I believe that, as drafted, it raises a number of serious concerns.

I must recommend against the Crees signing for a number of reasons, including the following:

1) The Grand Council of the Crees is now negotiating with the federal government regarding the full respect of all federal obligations to the Crees, including the implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

2) We have been very careful in these negotiations to assure ourselves that Cree rights will not be compromised in any way in the negotiation process.

3) We have established firm principles in accordance with the decisions of the Council/Board and the findings of the Cree Eeyou Astchee Commission Report that there will be no "sign-offs" on permanent obligations of the governments to the Crees and that no "caps" or ceilings will be placed on any of the obligations that the governments have undertaken in the JBNQA or may have under

Cree law, under the Constitution or international law.

4) We have also insisited that it is the Crees who will establish Cree priorities, and not the governments, and that our negotiations will be based on Cree priorities determined through a Cree consultation process.

5) Our strict insistence on respect for the principle of protection of Cree rights has made our negotiations somewhat more difficult. Nevertheless, we have been successful, and have maintained our protection of Cree rights in the face of pressures from governments to give up some of our rights and benefits in order to gain immediate payments of badly needed funding.

6) We have refused to become "hostages" to our need for quick funding. I have personally seen what this has done to the First Nations under the Northern Flood Agreement in Manitoba.

7) I have explained all of this in my consultations with the Cree communities.

8) A fundamental position we have taken in the federal negotiations is that the Cree institutions -- for example, the Cree School Board, the Cree Trappers' Association, James Bay Advisory Committee on the Environment, etc. -- are the "backbone" of our Nation. We have taken the position that these Cree institutions have not been properly funded, nor respected, nor fully implemented by either Quebec or Canada. The Cree Nation has taken the same position before the courts in the Matthew Coon Come case and the recent Cree School Board case.

9) The Cree institutions are a fundamental and important part of the benefits to the Crees under the JBNQA.

10) I was very concerned to see that under "Issue No. 5 -- Issues with respect to regional authorities" under the Addendum to the proposed MOU implementation agreement with Quebec, that the Grand Council of the Crees would agree to a review of the Cree institutions with Quebec to "reduce their numbers" and that "certain entities could be either abolished, combined with others, or have their mandates changed."

11) How can the Crees review their own Cree institutions with the Quebec government before, and without ever conducting such a review with our own people?

12) How is it that the Crees are willing to sit down with Quebec to consider the elimination of Cree entities without consulting with those entities, their members and their own Cree administrations?

13) Where is our own respect for our own Cree Nation government?

14) How can we agree with Quebec to discuss the destruction of the Cree entities? Where is the balance? After all Quebec is not agreeing to discuss the elimination of its own Quebec government institutions with us. It never would consider such a thing.

15) Do the Crees realize that most of the funding we receive -- over $150 million each year -- flows through these Cree institutions and Cree entities, and that the Cree entities employ hundreds of Crees?

16) Are we going to kill or harm the Cree entities just so we can get a payment from Quebec to keep promises Quebec has already made in the JBNQA?

17) Why should we have to give up Cree rights and sign more agreements to make the governments keep the agreements they have already made? Each time we do this we lose more.

18) How am I, as the Cree/federal negotiator, supposed to negotiate increased funding and recognition for the Cree entities, while at another table, the Crees and Quebec are discussing the elimination of the same entities I am mandated to strengthen?

19) How can we be signing this agreement with Quebec right after the report of the Cree Eeyou Istchee Commission, which calls for the strengthening of Cree institutions, not their elimination?

20) Finally, all of this is being proposed under a complementary agreement, which means an amendment to the JBNQA, a binding treaty.

21) I understand that both Canada and Quebec would like the Crees to sign away their rights in order to obtain a settlement. But we have agreed that it is more important to protect our rights for the future -- to fight again another day -- than to give up our rights to get something at any cost. It is not worth it.

22) Let us respect our own Cree institutions, as Quebec respects and strengthens its own institutions. But first, please, let us discuss this among ourselves before we make a mistake.

23) I am writing because of the major effect this will have on the Cree/federal negotiations, but also as a former negotiator of the JBNQA, a former chief, a forme r Grand Chief, a member of the Eeyou Istchee Commission and most of all as a Cree beneficiary. I only wish this had been brought to my attention sooner, so that I could have acted sooner.

Meegwetch.

TED MOSES (SIGNED)

(For Chief Diamond's response, see next page.)

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A Message from Chief Abel Bosum

I would like to extend my congratulations to all of my fellow recipients of this year's Aboriginal Achievement Awards for their remarkable and inspiring contributions to our aboriginal community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of those people who made Ouje-Bougoumou's achievements possible. First and foremost, we would not have been able to endure our very long political struggles, nor to summon up from within ourselves the courage and the creativity to build our new village, were it not for the encouragement, the vision and the wisdom of our elders. If we have been able to see far it is only because we have been privileged to stand on their shoulders. To all our elders, even those who unfortunately are no longer with us, I share this award with you.

When we first began our struggle we had few people to count on for support. Many thought we were on an impossible mission. To those who never gave up and were always there for us, I share this award with you as well. Thank you to Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come, former Grand Chief Ted Moses, former Grand Chief Billy Diamond, my long time advisor and friend Paul Wertman, members of our negotiating team including Roderick Pachano, Bill Namagoose, James O'Reilly and Norman Hawkins, and the mediator, Judge Rejean Paul.

Of course, the award which I received is in reality a recognition of the achievements of an entire community. I wish to express my enduring gratitude and love for all my fellow community members and wish to share this award with all of you. I would particularly like to again express thanks to all the Ouje-Bougoumou Councillors for their advice and support and to the Capissisit family for offering part of their hunting territory as the location of our village.

In addition to the wisdom received from our elders, our community also received invaluable spiritual guidance from Rev. Hugo Muller, Enoch Hall and Charles Morton.

And, on a personal note, I will always be profoundly grateful to my wife, Sophie, my children, Irene, Curtis, Reggie and Nathaniel who were constant sources of support for me and who tolerated my too frequent absences.

Meegwetch to you all.

Dear Teddy:

I have just received your memo that was distributed widely regarding the ongoing Cree/Quebec negotiations. I am, with respect, disappointed and flabbergasted with the reaction and your letter. It is not based on the essential nature of the process which we have out in place with Quebec. I also would have thought that for a matter of such importance that you would have spoken to me first to get the proper final documents and get a full explanation of the process.

The Cree people and their leaders must address this issue with all the facts before them and with the knowledge of what is an effective Cree strategy to deal with the respect of Cree Rights and obligations of governments - all governments.

Different paths have been taken to address obligations of Quebec and Canada. They are different because of the relationships we have with them, the political and legal realities of the times, and the nature of Cree priorities. I may have many concerns about the approach with Canada, but agree wholeheartedly that all federal obligations should be respected. The difficulty I have is the JBNQA and other foundations of Cree rights apply to Quebec as well. This point seems to be lost in your letter.

Let me deal only with the Quebec situation and the contents of your memo. Point numbers 1 to 9 are ones that are not in dispute and are endorsed by me completely. In fact, the whole process with Quebec has been one which is entirely consistent with and supportive of these principles.

- Cree rights must be respected.
- There can be no releases or sign offs until the Crees agree that an obligation has been respected and fulfilled.
-The negotiations with Quebec should not impact upon federal obligations.
- Cree priorities must be respected.
- There can be no "hostages."

THE MOU AND THE FINAL IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT DRAFT RESPECT ALL OF THESE PRINCIPLES

We have an agreement before us that specifically says that this is without prejudice to the position of the Crees, court proceedings and other basis for Cree Rights. What is wrong with this?

We have capital and related projects put before Quebec that have been prepared, prioritized and submitted by the communities themselves and the offices of Managers of the various Bands. Cree priorities and community leadership was fully respected.

We also have Quebec capital funding of $15,000,000, but the Quebec cabinet cut it to reflect the amount received in the federal negotiation pursuant to the Agreement of August 14, 1997. Other capital negotiations continue with no preconditions. What is wrong with this?

We finally have issues of principles such as the application of Quebec programs resolved. Important issues such as preferential contracts, the revival of SODAB, a training centre, access roads, services and facilities for the elderly and disabled subject to community direction on the way they wish their people to be treated, and other specific issues are to be addressed - after over 23 years of neglect. What is wrong with this?

We have in the document a recognition that there will now be revenue sharing and wealth sharing on the table. We both know the difficulties in having this brought back, not as a theoretical question, but in the context of how it is going to be done. What is wrong with this?

We have addressed only the specific issues in this document, but leaving open our positions on other matters. We have specifically said that "Parallel Negotiations" - on health, education, police, justice, income security, environment should continue.

By doing this we give further support and substance to these negotiations. What is wrong with this?

Parallel to this document and as a partial result of it, a table has been established between Quebec, Mistissini and Oujé-Bougoumou to address a list of issues relating to land transfer, the 1989 MOU, access road issues, and whatever else the ingenuity and imagination of Chiefs Mianscum and Bosum can bring to the table. What is wrong with this?

I now must address the issue that takes up most of your memo and cannot stand. Component number 5 of the process provides in the MOU for negotiations on "Regional Authorities" and in the implementation Plan we go into more detail on what can be done.

This section was added to give us a way of reviewing entities, authorities and committees that have evolved and where situations have changed. We have even included the JDBC and SEBJ as possible entities to be considered.

The draft of this section which you cited is not correct [*The letter quotes Issue No. 5 as it appears on p. 24 of this issue -Ed*]... Firstly, this section provides for the making of recommendations on issues - not action on issues. Secondly, nothing in this section can go forward without the Cree agreement that the entity in question should be reviewed.

I have made it clear in the explanations to the Chiefs, to the Grand Chief, to the Deputy Grand Chief, to those who attended the briefing of the Chiefs in Val d'Or on January 20 and at the Council/Board meeting of January 22 and anyone who wished to ask me that question, that there has not been any decision taken by the Crees in regard to any entity on this list. This will be done only after the approval of that entity has been sought and the Cree Nation as a whole decides that it wants to deal with the issue.

We have said for years that it is necessary to modernize and to upgrade or review certain entities and this is the opportunity to do so. We are not bound to deal with any entity and it was made clear to the Cree School Board last week, for example, that this is not only the intent, but the commitment.

You are tilting at windmills -- there is a danger here that does not exist. You have been led to ignore the actual wording of the section, led to believe that the Cree negotiator is acting here in bad faith, and have not asked me what this section is meant to do and will do.

Nothing -- nothing -- nothing happens without the Crees and their institutions consenting. In fact, this is the opportunity for the Crees to strengthen and give effect to Cree rights -- and indeed to raise them to a higher level.

I must now deal with a delicate issue. There are those who will be against my agreement with Quebec -- no matter what it says and what it contains. I understand that and have made it clear that such a policy is not in the best interests of the Crees. It may be the position of some of those who advise us -- but WE must decide what is best for our people.

Negotiations are one way of moving forward -- with both governments -- and I will fight when I have to and negotiate and talk when it is right to do so. I will not heed the advice of those who, under all circumstances and without exception, refuse to deal with Quebec and Canada, and even when they do so, they do it only with the purpose of destroying relations and not improving them, and in the process of destroying the Crees. We have advisors and Cree bureaucrats now thinking of only their own gains and not the Cree Nation. ... The process has been fully explained to the Chiefs and approved by the Council/Board. They can always change their position, but I strongly recommend to the Crees that we proceed, sign the documents and go forward with the next phase of these negotiations.

CHIEF BILLY DIAMOND
(signed)

Grand Council of the Crees did submit our (the Cree Nation's) intervention in the Alashua Case and, again in the recent Cree School Board Case, that our rights were extinguished in return for certain benefits. In the latter case, we have read in the judgement that the Quebec court declares that the government of Quebec has sovereignty over all of the territory. Why is this allowed to happen when we, the Cree leadership, is expected to protect Cree rights over Eeyou Istchee?

As the courts are just another forum for "negotiation," in the case of the CSB case, and perhaps in the Matthew Coon Come case as well, we certainly deviated away from the spirit and intent of the 1995 Declaration of Principles, which opened doors toward Cree nation-building (self-determination). At the time, the trust was placed with the Cree Nation leadership to walk us toward self-determination and to protect Cree rights. With regard to the submissions in the courts, we ask: How does the Cree leadership propose to get out of this one? How do we explain this to our people?

With respect to what we term "nation-building" (self-determination and self-governance), we had thought that this was our objective as a Nation in declaring a set of Principles of Self-Determination in 1995 and in the subsequent 1997 General Assembly Resolution calling for a Declaration of the Eeyouch at the 1997 Cree Nation General Assembly in Ouje-Bougoumou. Today, where are we headed?

The WFN believes that nation-building and restructuring as envisioned by the Eeyouch in 1995 are the best options if we are going to be perpetually strong and prosperous as a nation, culturally, socially, economically, politically and otherwise. With respect to this option, the questions that immediately come to mind are: What would be the social, economic and political ramifications of making such a move (a Declaration)? Would Quebec and Canada immediately strike to end the present negotiations? Would the Canadian state delcare war on the Crees? With the wave of support that has hit us over the last few years in our plight to win political recognition, nationally, internationally and, lately, in the Supreme Court of Canada, we think that this would be highly unlikely.

Given the last judgement of the Supreme Court of Canada on aboriginal rights and title to land and resources in the Delgamuukw case, we submit that there is no other opportunity than the present to go for the formal establishment of a Cree National Government and assert our full jurisdiction and control over Eeyou Istchee. We must move forward in this direction as Quebec is preparing to hold an election and perhaps another referendum on sovereignty. We are aware that there is great reservation and perhaps even fear within the Cree leadership toward this idea of making a declaration on our sovereign status as we see it. But this puts a question on our faith in the Great Creator as our Maker, Provider and Protector, a belief that the WFN envisions would be asserted in the proposed Declaration.

The ultimate aim of this Declaration would be beyond simply asserting that our rights and freedoms, political, social, economic and cultural rights derive from previous agreements or from existing government legislation. We would in fact be claiming that these rights flow from laws of the Great Creator and are of divine nature, and also from our inherent status as a nation and as a people. In light of this position, the Declaration and the subsequent process of Cree Nation restructuring need not be subject to government recognition, since this would ultimately be made to the Great Creator and to ourselves. We believe the rest would follow if we place the trust in the Great Creator to walk us through with our vision and mission to be a strong and prosperous nation in all respects.

We believe that the Cree Nation must make an attempt at all costs to influence not only the force of constitutional law as it concerns the establishment of treaty relationships between governments and indigenous peoples, but also to exert some influence in the way indigenous peoples are dealt with under international law. We see the proposed Declaration as the ultimate tool for establishing improved relations with governments, one that would be quoted in every court case that we instigate should we choose, again, to take that form of "negotiation." If we do this, we would ultimately be forcing the courts to interpret it, although its real meaning would be written in our language - affirming our true status and identity as a people of a distinct race, distinct language, culture and way of life. The WFN is certain that this would be a great challenge for the governments and courts.

OUR CONCLUSION

We realize that much is stated in this letter that may be of sensitive nature, but nevertheless it has been stated. We want to assure you that we are proud of the work that was undertaken by the Grand Council of the Crees with respect to interventions in the Supreme Court case on the Quebec independence question as well as in other areas.

We, however, caution that as leaders we feel that we must now response to the voice and vision of our people with respect to self-determination and self-governance. We must remember that this is a vision and voice of our youth (the future of our nation), women, men and, more importantly, that of our respected Elders. This fact cannot be ignored.

We propose, therefore, that everything be done immediately to follow up on the 1996 recommendations by the Eeyou Estchee Commission. This will involve setting up of a regional and local task forces and defining their mandates; establishing a framework for the process; assessment of human and financial resource needs; and the like. We further propose that direction be given in this regard as soon as next week at the GCCEI/CRA Council/Board meeting in Val d'Or. And we must see to it that our negotiations strategies with governments take us forward, building on the rights that we have, rather than opening the door to their being abolished, as envisioned in the current Quebec MOU draft document.

Matthew, we hope that we have made a point in this letter that will be taken seriously and not simply set aside without due consideration and response. The WFN is greatly concerned over the matters raised here. We can only expect an affirmative response and a clear statement by the Cree Nation leadership with respect to these matters.

As a last statement in this letter, we quote the following paragraph from the 1995 Declaration of Principles by the Eeyouch as a reminder of the direction we ought to be taking as a strong and powerful nation:

"As peoples with the right to self-determination, we shall freely decide our political status and associations and freely pursue our future as a people."

Watchia!

Respectfully yours,

WHAPMAGOOSTUI FIRST NATION
MATTHEW MUKASH, CHIEF (SIGNED)

Between friends

by Deantha Edmunds

What are we really looking for?

No matter where we come from, or whatever our situation, we are constantly striving for something bigger, better, easier. In the end, we hope to find happiness. Sometimes we lose sight of who we are, what we're here for, and it feels like we have nowhere to turn. We have to search for ways to stay on the right path, to get motivated, and to stay inspired.

The following is taken from *Chicken Soup for the Soul, 101 Stories to Open The Heart And Rekindle The Spirit*, compiled by Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen. I hope you will read this, and that in some way it will help you on your journey.

THE RULES FOR BEING HUMAN

1. You will receive a body. You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours for the entire period of this time around.

2. You will learn lessons. You are enrolled in a full-time informal school called Life. Each day in this school you will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons or think them irrelevant and stupid.

3. There are no mistakes, only lessons. Growth is a process of trial and error: Experimentation. The "failed" experiments are as much a part of the process as the experiment that ultimately "works."

4. A lesson is repeated until learned. A lesson will be presented to you in various forms until you have learned it. When you have learned it, you can then go on to the next lesson.

5. Learning lessons does not end. There is no part of life that does not contain its lessons. If you are alive, there are lessons to be learned.

6. "There" is no better than "here." When your "there" has become a "here," you will simply obtain another "there" that will again look better than "here."

7. Others are merely mirrors of you. You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects something you love or hate about yourself.

8. What you make of your life is up to you. You have all the tools and resources you need. What you do with them is up to you. The choice is yours.

9. Your answers lie inside you. The answers to Life's questions lie inside you. All you need to do is look, listen and trust.

10. You will forget all this.

These rules were written by Cherie Carter-Scott

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The Twilight Zone

By Thelma & Louise
Alive and Bitching!

Pisces (Feb 19-March 20) Change is in the air. However, you are feeling ignored and unwanted. But cheer up "sushi" we still love ya. You are headed in a new direction. There is also a possibility of new romance. Keep those hawk eyes peeled.

Aries (March 21-April 19) You are feeling energetic and self-assured. Ideas will no longer be vague and cloudy. They will burst forth in an expression of creativity. Your libido is inflamed with unanswered cravings.

Taurus (April 20-May 19) Youhoo... Anyone home? Knock-Knock! Anybody there? Guess who? No this is not some lame knock-knock joke. It's not funny. Stop laughing. By the way, the house of romance signals a turning point. Ya, whatever, eh! Odds are on the latter. T.T.F.N.

Gemini (May 20-June 21) Control freak in your life gets worse. That's good news for some. Rethink your old ideas and beliefs. Difficult decision will be made and overcome. You'll see. You'll be fine. Fine and fancy free. Knock-Knock.

Cancer (June 22-July 22) Settle some scores with some back stabbing rotten cold hearted depressing annoying bitchy repugnant hateful despicable enemies. Once the blood settles, you'll have a clearer vision of what you want and what you won't settle for. Its spring-cleaning time.

Leo (July 23-Aug 23) Exciting relationships on the horizon. There is plenty to chose from, not. Be careful. You could do something, which you'll regret in the morning. Too much confidence could lead to embarrassing results.

Virgo (Aug 24-Sept 22) Problem will be resolved by taking out what is useless. You feel tense and short-tempered. Too bad, so sad, but we're glad. Facial expressions if not monitored will lead to stressful encounters. Yours, not your loved one's, you twit.

Libra (Sept 23-Oct 22) Get up, stand up. Stand up for your rights. No one else will do it for you! Go ahead. Just go ahead and settle for second hand. This is not a recording. Be idealistic and not realistic. Why not? You've got plenty to lose in this unfulfilling venture. 2 thumbs down!

Scorpio (Oct 23-Nov 21) Steamy romance is what you want and you'll get it. It won't last. It is short term. Careful who knows about it. Don't want to lose those precious fingers. Anything that can be lost, delayed and or mixed up, will be. Have a nice day.

Sagittarius (Nov 22-Dec 22) Still need to evolve. "Beware of dog" sign should be in your window. You might have to ride out some tense situations with your conjoint. Good Luck. Keep evolving. Thelma & Louise salute you. This is all the reassurance you'll get. So there you go!

Capricorn (Dec 23-Jan 19) You want to show off the "more together" you. Something you've hidden well so far. Problems and misunderstandings will emerge. Nothing new for the new you. Strained to the point of nasty, you are. You go girl.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb 18) We forgot the poor little aqua's last issue. Please excuse the technical difficulties. After all, only computers make mistakes. We do not. Anyway, you are unusually passionate (oh la la) this month. Something new and fun is certainly tempting you, isn't it! Go for it. But be warned, you are still being watched.

DO YOU KNOW THE ACT?

The Commission des Normes du Travail is keeping you informed!

The Act respecting Labour Standards contains numerous provisions. It deals with the following subjects in particular:

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- Special leaves with or without pay
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- Maternity leave and paternity leave
- Absences by reason of illness or accident
- Provisions relating to the termination of employment or dismissal

In addition, the Act protects employees by prohibiting employers from dismissing employees on certain grounds, or suspending, transferring or exercising discriminatory measures or reprisals against them. It also prohibits, after three years of uninterrupted service, dismissals not made for good and sufficient cause.

To find out more about the Act respecting Labour Standards or the recourses that it permits, contact Customer Services at the **Commission des normes du travail**.

Greater Montréal Area: **873-7061**
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Internet: **http://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca**

Gouvernement du Québec
Commission des normes du travail

A gentleman

This was a humbleman,
He asked nothing from you,
Except your love and loyalty.
I am not trying
To put him on a pedestal,
For he was only human.
He had his own downfalls,
Yet it seemed they were few.

He was a wiryman, full of life and vigor,
A loving husband, a generous father,
A wonderful father-in-law,
And most of all a marvelous grandfather.
He'd do work many men would shy away from.
He loved to hunt and fish.

There was always something to do
A favour for a family member,
A friend, a neighbour, or a stranger.
He loved to travel and visit places
To keep the ties of family and friends,
Whether it be near or far.

There was always time
For the grandchild/great grandchild
To show him the culture,
To tell him the stories,
To spend time with,
To have fun with,
Or just to do or make things for,
His way of saying, "I love you,
My grandchild/great grandchild
You are special and unique."

He made everyone feel special,
Without even knowing,
His actions and deeds spoke
Louder than words,
For his love for each of us.
Now some of us may feel
A sense of remorse and guilt.
Thinking we didn't find enough time
To visit him, to show our love
Our appreciation and our loyalty,
During the last few years,
He was in the hospital.

I know he understands now,
What it is each one wants to say,
How it was for us, to see
His pain, his misery, knowing
How he hardly wasted time.
He knows our shortcomings,
But he's not begrudging us.
He knows how dearly we love him,
And he will continue to live in our hearts
His wisdom will be passed on.
We are thankful to have shared his life.
A wonderful role model to follow,
And we were lucky to have had
Such a gentleman in our midst.

Annie Neeposh Iseroff

Editor's Note: We are reprinting this poem because of typos the first time we printed it. We regret any inconvenience we may have caused. We apologize to the family.

Correction

A letter from Kathleen Wooton in our last issue contained a few typing errors. We apologize for the mistakes.

An article by Reggie Tomatuk in the Vol. 5, no. 7 issue stated incorrectly that the Wildlife Conservation course took place in Mont Laurier. It actually occurred in Chisasibi. We have been asked to list the participants in the course: Eddie Bearskin, Clarence Lameboy, Smith Martinhunter, Frank Coonishish, Reggie Tomatuk, Brian Monias, David Wadden, Jimmy Kanatewat and Alfred Nine O'Clock.

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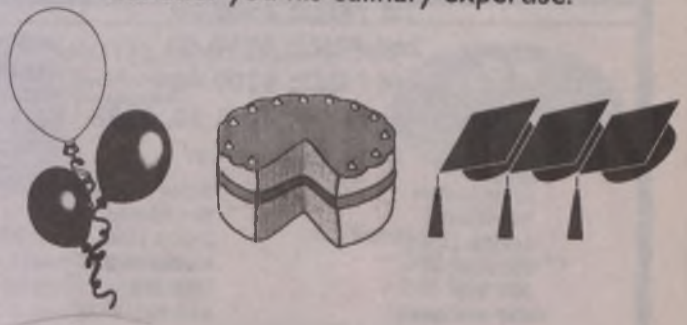
RESERVE NOW!

101-BIRTHDAYS

Alicia Diana. Happy 2nd birthday to our sister Clarissa Dawn Jessie. Love you Alicia and Diana Esau (Wask)

Happy belated birthday to our cousin Derian Whiskeychan who turned 3 years old on Feb. 19, 1998. We hope you had lots of fun. Sorry we couldn't be there for your birthday. With lots of love, hugs and kisses, your cousins in Chisasibi, Kara Lyn, Kavena and baby Anna.

Happy belated 15th birthday to my good friend Nina Margaret Metabie in Mistissini on February 26, 1998. From somebody who misses you a lot. P.S. Did you have fun on your birthday? Bye bye my good friend.

Happy birthday Lina. We wish you the best for the year. What is it now, twenty something? From your happy colleagues at the CSB.

Happy 1st birthday to our son Jermain James Munroe Opashieeyuu Cheezo on March 20, 1998 and many more to come. You were with us on our long journey from Val d'Or to Eastmain (710 km walk) Now we still have a long journey to go on. We will always love you. Mom and dad. (Christine and Dennis Cheezo).

Wishing a happy 16th birthday to a friend of mine in Wemindji Ricki Leyll on April 13, 1998. I wish you the best in your studies and in everything you do. hope to see you in the meantime. Take care. Your friend Minnie C. Hull, Quebec.

Happy birthday to my friend Audrey Gilpin Trapper on March 23rd. Wishing you all the best. From your friend Isabelle.

Happy 1st birthday to our nephew Jermain James Munroe Opashieeyuu on March 20th. Hoping that your day will be as special as you are to us. Love always from our uncle George and your aunt Isabelle.

Birthday greetings to my friend Audrey who will be turning whatever on March 23rd. Hoping your day will be special. Just our luck, it had to be a Monday and we have to wait for the weekend to celebrate and go dancing. From your friend always beautiful feet.

A happy birthday to our dad Ricky W. Gilpin on the 28th of March. You have shown us plenty of love and understanding even though we give you a hard time sometimes. But maybe someday we will return it to you when you need it most. We love you so much from your four K's.

Happy 1st birthday to sweet and cherubic Brendan Ratt on March 29, 1998. With love, Jennifer and Ryan.

Happy birthday to Abraham Salt on April 1, (wherever you are). I hope you have a good b-day. And many more to come.... From a friend

Happy belated birthday to my mom Nellie on February 24. Mom, I love you for taking care of me when I was small, for protecting me and for helping me conquer my problems and for giving me just the right amount of freedom. Happy birthday mom and many more to come. From Margaret.

Happy belated birthday to Samantha on February 27 and to Marysh and Reggie on March 6&7. Happy birthday to you guys and many more to come. Love you from Margaret.

Happy 1st birthday to my grandson Jermain James Munroe Opashiyeeyou Cheezo on March 20th. Wishing you all the best on your birthday. Hugs and kisses from your grandpa Frank.

Happy 2nd birthday to Vincent on April 3rd, with lots and lots of love. We are sure you will enjoy your day! Hugs and kisses from mommy, daddy and Alex.

This poem is for my daughter and friend Caroline Rabbitskin whose birthday is on March 2. Happy birthday and hope you have a great day! GIFT FROM A DAUGHTER. You give me light when my life seems dark. You give me hope when I lose mine. I am so happy to have a daughter and a friend who gives me all these things. I am forever grateful for what you've given me and hope that I in turn can give them back to you. Love always, your mom and friend Lillian.

Happy belated birthday to Adele Bellefleur on Feb. 24. Love, hugs and kisses from Godfather General. Chisasibi.

Thinking of you on your 18th birthday when you celebrated it in Ojay in February. Just hoping it turned out to be great and sweet as you. It's hard for me to face another day with out you in it. I still think about you. (my favorite song) I luv U.

103-ANNIVERSARIES

Here comes another year for me to wish the love of my life a very happy wedding anniversary on the 20th of March and a very happy birthday on the 28th to Ricky W. Gilpin. I couldn't have asked for a better person to share the rest of my life with. You and the kids are the light and joy of my life. I love you so much. From your wife Queenie.

105-OBITS

In loving memory of a dear wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great grandmother Demeris Gilpin Stewart who passed away March 20, 1995. God looked upon his garden and found an empty space.

LAST CHANCE!!

Calendar Baby Picture Contest

Hey! It's the last chance to send your pictures!

All prizes will be gift certificates to buy groceries.

1st PRIZE: $500.00
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Helen Menegatos
Nutritionist
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Mistissini QC
GOW 1CO
418-923-3376

Good Luck! Send Lots of Pictures!
Please avoid sending Polaroid Photos.

Then he looked down upon the earth and saw your tired face, he put his arms around you and lifted you to rest. God's garden must be beautiful for he only takes the best. He saw the road was getting rough and the hills were hard to climb. He closed your weary eyes and whispered, "Peace be thine." It broke our hearts to lose you. But you did not go alone. For part of us went with you. To God's garden, your new home. Sadly missed and forever remembered. Marion and Raymond, Fred, Sara, Clara and Elmer, Morley and Anne, Dorothy, Henry and Lillian, Linda and Barney, Donald, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

300-PERSONALS

Hello there! Nicole Tanoush from Nemaska. How have you been lately? I haven't heard from you so I thought I'd drop a line in the Nation to let you know I'm still waiting for you. You know what...Gotta go! From Hull.

The family of the late Sinclair Stewart who passed away February 14, 198 would like to express their thanks to our wonderful relatives and friends for their kindness and sympathy during this hard time. The burden of this great sorrow was lessened with all the love and support we received. Marion, Fred, Sara, Clara, Morley, Dorothy, Henry, Linda and Donald.

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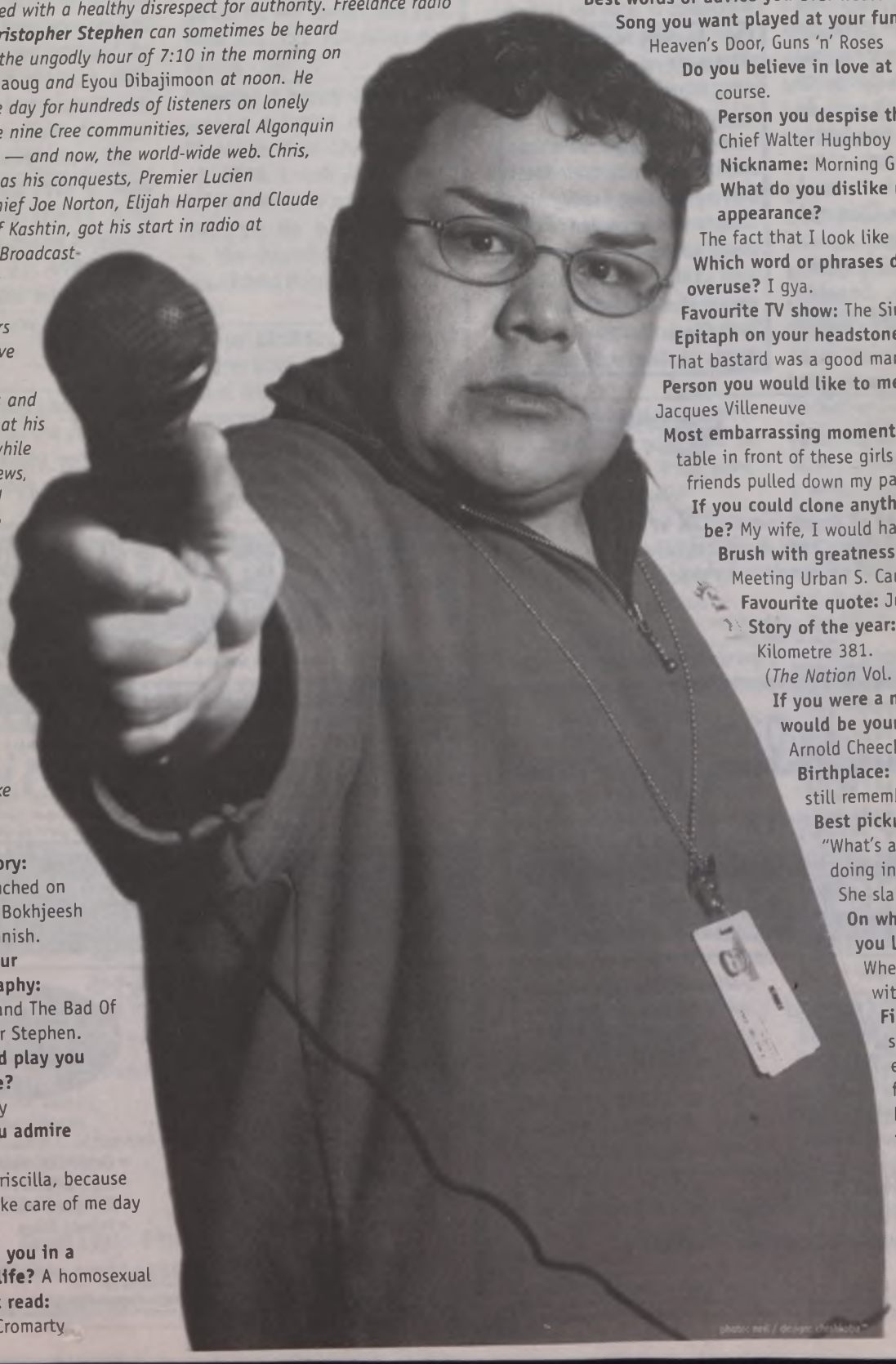
by Ndiamon™

He's armed with a booming voice inherited from his dad, but his attitude's filled with a healthy disrespect for authority. Freelance radio journalist ***Christopher Stephen*** *can sometimes be heard weekdays at the ungodly hour of 7:10 in the morning on CBC's* Winshgaoug *and* Eyou Dibajimoon *at noon. He kickstarts the day for hundreds of listeners on lonely traplines, the nine Cree communities, several Algonquin communities — and now, the world-wide web. Chris, who counts, as his conquests, Premier Lucien Bouchard, Chief Joe Norton, Elijah Harper and Claude MacKenzie of Kashtin, got his start in radio at Moose River Broadcasting in Moose Factory.*

His listeners know and love him for his comic asides and little teases at his colleagues while doing the news, weather and sports. If he keeps going the way he is, he just might become the Cree Howard Stern. God knows Cree radio needs someone like Howard.



First Memory: Getting pinched on my arm by Bokhjeesh in Waskaganish.

Title of your autobiography: The Good and The Bad Of Christopher Stephen.

Who would play you in a movie? John Candy

Person you admire the most: My wife, Priscilla, because she can take care of me day or night.

Who were you in a previous life? A homosexual

Last book read: Margaret Cromarty

Greatest fear: Losing my loved ones.

Best words of advice you ever heard: Wear a condom.

Song you want played at your funeral: Knockin' On Heaven's Door, Guns 'n' Roses

Do you believe in love at first sight? But of course.

Person you despise the most: Chief Walter Hughboy

Nickname: Morning Glory

What do you dislike most about your appearance? The fact that I look like my dad.

Which word or phrases do you most overuse? I gya.

Favourite TV show: The Simpsons

Epitaph on your headstone: That bastard was a good man.

Person you would like to meet most: Jacques Villeneuve

Most embarrassing moment: I was dancing on a table in front of these girls when one of my friends pulled down my pants.

If you could clone anything what would it be? My wife, I would have two wives.

Brush with greatness: Meeting Urban S. Campbell

Favourite quote: Just stuck aah.

Story of the year: Ugliness at Kilometre 381. (*The Nation* Vol. 4 No.16)

If you were a movie star who would be your co-star? Arnold Cheechoo

Birthplace: Rouyn-Noranda. I can still remember when I came out.

Best pickup line you've used. "What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?" She slapped me in the face.

On what occasion do you lie? When I need to go out with my friends.

First kiss: It was a sloppy one but I enjoyed it. I was fourteen.

How would you like to be remembered? That I did all my best.

First job: Cleaning and mopping the floors at Laura's Snack Bar.

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